

Highways to History: The Archaeology of Connecticut's 18th-Century Lifeways

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Highways to History:

The Archaeology of Connecticut's 18th-Century Lifeways

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Mary G. Harper
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Acknowledgements

Many people helped bring this book to fruition. The book was first proposed by now-retired State Historic Preservation Office staff archaeologist David A. Poirier. Poirier had overseen archaeological excavations of several Colonial house sites buried in the paths of road improvement projects and recognized the public interest in the findings as well as the process that brought about the archaeology. Most people are unaware that public-funded projects often require studies to ensure that no historically significant buried archaeological sites are destroyed. The Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Connecticut office of the Federal Highway Administration made a commitment to facilitate the writing and publication of this public-oriented volume on 18th-century lifeways in Connecticut, based on highway-related excavations. At FHWA, Robert Turner and Amy Jackson Grove were supportive. At CTDOT, Keith T. Hall and Pamela Rackliffe, now retired, were early and steadfast supporters; Robert Cless, Jessica DiLuca, Mark Alexander and Stephen Delpapa shepherded the book through its later stages, and Mandy Ranslow, C. Scott Speal and Thomas Doyle provided helpful comments. Erik Mas of Fuss and O'Neill, Inc., the consultant to CTDOT through whom the authors worked, was a model project manager.

A dozen archaeologists and historians at Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., and its affiliate Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc., worked excavating the archaeological sites over several years, washing and cataloguing thousands of artifacts, drawing maps and taking photographs, and helping to make sense of what was found in the ground and in the archives. Senior Archaeologist Ross K. Harper directed the archaeological excavations. Senior Historian Bruce Clouette conducted the document research that provided historical context to the house sites. Robyn Beausoleil is the glue that holds us together at AHS and the compass that keeps us pointing in the right direction.

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This book is dedicated to the memory of Robert Cless. A colleague and friend, Bob epitomized kindness, patience, courage and grace.

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Front cover (clockwise): Portion of the probate inventory of Ephraim Sprague, 1754; archaeologist excavating the north cellar at the Goodsell Site in North Branford; posset pot from the Goodsell Site; ca.1900 view of farms in Woodstock, showing a landscape like the one that characterized much of Connecticut in the 18th century.

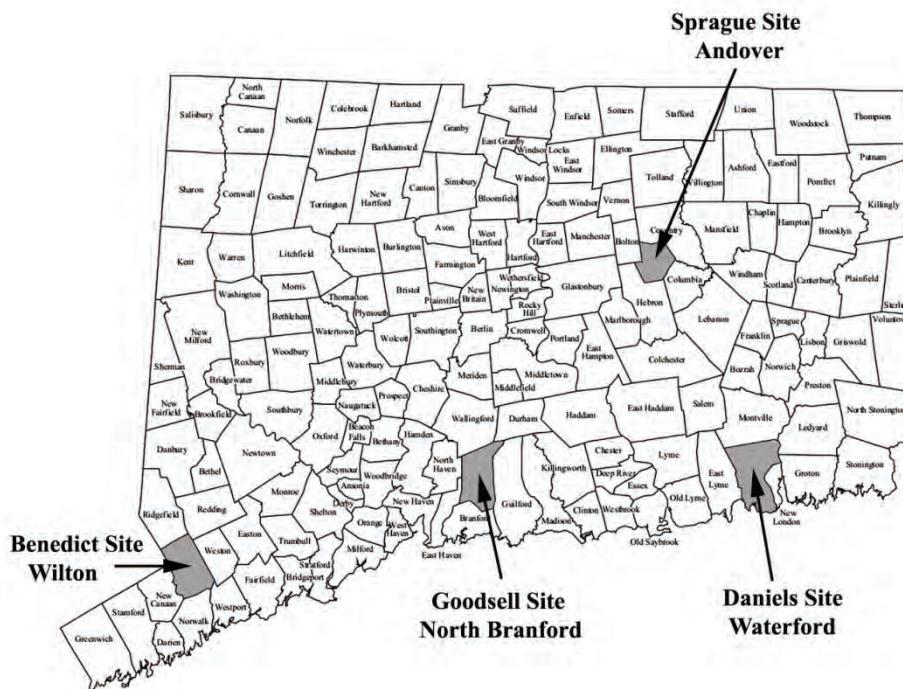
Back cover: English white salt-glazed stoneware creamer, cross-mended from more than a dozen fragments recovered from the Sprague Site in Andover.

Introduction

Introduction

Connecticut recently adopted the slogan “Connecticut: Still Revolutionary,” and it is a good fit; this book is proof in a number of ways. The book is about Colonial-period lifeways in Connecticut, based on data recovered from archaeological excavations of the buried sites of four 18th-century houses: in Andover, North Branford, Waterford and Wilton. The archaeological data, combined with documentary research, opens a new window into how people in Connecticut lived in Colonial times. That’s revolutionary, but so is the way in which the excavations, and this book, occurred in the first place. The four sites were discovered, and then studied, only because they were in the paths of Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) highway improvement projects. Since the 1970s, federal laws have

mandated that highway projects identify archaeological sites that may be impacted by proposed construction, and take actions to avoid or mitigate impacts to important sites. The four sites that are the subject of this book could not be avoided without compromising highway safety: the ca. 1705 Ephraim Sprague House in Andover was in the path of improvements to U.S. Route 6; the ca. 1737 Goodsell Homestead in North Branford sat in the only alignment that could improve a dangerous intersection; the 1712 Thomas Daniels House in Waterford was situated in the middle of a necessary new highway interchange; and the ca. 1713 Benedict House in Wilton lay buried on the edge of U.S. Route 7, which had to be widened to accommodate increased traffic.



Location of the four sites discussed in this book.

Because it was impossible for CTDOT to design around the four sites, they were excavated by professional archaeologists, who removed most of the contents of the sites, such as artifacts and food remains. Structural components, like cellar walls, were documented but left in place. But the importance of the sites is not in the “stuff” found: it is in the stories the sites have to tell through artifacts and structural remnants that had been buried for centuries. The four house sites provide new information on how people lived in Connecticut in the 18th century.

A state transportation department conducting archaeological investigations is not in itself revolutionary, but how the State of Connecticut approached the excavations of these four sites is. CTDOT, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), not only sponsored extensive excavations, it took innovative steps to ensure that the public benefits from the studies. CTDOT funded public presentations in the four site regions, the creation of two in-depth web sites (<http://www.ahs-inc.biz/Sprague/> and <http://www.ahs-inc.biz/Daniels/>), and, finally the writing and publication of this book, which synthesizes the data from all of the sites to tell new stories of everyday life in Colonial Connecticut. Few states have supported this level of public dissemination of the results of highway-related archaeological and historical research. Connecticut is at the forefront of uncovering, advancing and sharing the understanding of our past, to the benefit of us all.

This book is organized into seven chapters. Chapter One explains the process of how the sites were found and interpreted – the impetus behind the archaeological investigations and the mechanics of the discoveries and excavations – and why archaeological and historical research matters to all of us. This chapter was written by AHS Principal Mary G. Harper, M.A.

In Chapter Two, Senior Historian Bruce Clouette, Ph.D., provides an overview of Connecticut in the 18th century, as known from documents, in order to provide a framework for interpreting the four house sites found below the ground. In Chapter Three, Clouette focuses on the four sites, providing site-specific summaries of documentary information on the families who occupied the houses.

In Chapter Four, Senior Archaeologist Ross K. Harper, Ph.D., uses the archaeological and historical data from the site investigations to illuminate house and farm life in 18th-century Connecticut, with a focus on house form and homelot activities. In Chapter Five, Harper reconstructs the foodways of Colonial Connecticut through the prisms of the four sites. In Chapter Six, Harper explores everyday craft work at the houses.

In Chapter Seven, Mary G. Harper brings the book full circle to summarize how the stories of each site are at once individual and representative of a broader Connecticut Yankee culture. The book concludes with a précis of how highway-related archaeological and historical investigations have enhanced the understanding of our past, and what the public can do to help uncover, preserve and tell the stories of how we once lived.

Chapter 1:

Archaeology and Cultural Resource Management

Archaeology and Cultural Resource Management

The average person driving around Connecticut today passes through rural, suburban and urban landscapes on the way to work, school, shopping and family. Most people are aware of the built environment – homes, factories, shopping centers, highways and bridges – as well as scenic vistas of the state's beautiful hills, valleys and shores. Archaeologists and historians see all this and more: they notice how old a bridge appears to be, and how an 18th-century house is all but hidden by vinyl siding, and they see unbuilt land as potential archaeological sites because they know that much of the state's history is buried underground. Indeed, if you spend much of your career working in transportation archaeology and history, driving is nearly an occupational hazard as you wonder what stories could be buried, basically anywhere.

The biggest changes to our landscape came with the construction of the national highway system in the 1950s and 60s. In the process of moving ever more people at ever increasing speeds across America, uncountable numbers of historic buildings, bridges, landscapes, and archaeological sites were unwittingly destroyed. The federal government began to recognize the irreparable loss of these historic resources in the pursuit of progress and enacted laws in the 1960s to ensure that highway development and improvement did not adversely affect historic and archaeological resources. The laws required agencies using federal monies or requiring a federal permit to take into consideration their effects on significant historic structures, landscapes, and archaeological sites, and to avoid or mitigate impacts to these historic and archaeological resources before highway projects could proceed. And thus began

the new discipline of cultural resource management, with resources including all human-made or altered places, ranging from Native American campsites, to buried buildings and mills, to landscape features such as stone walls and vestigial roads.

By the 1970s state transportation departments began to hire archaeologists and historians to identify potentially significant historic and archaeological resources in the path of construction, and to develop ways of preserving these resources, through redesign to avoid archaeological sites or moving historic structures. But unlike structures, archaeological sites cannot be relocated and preserved intact. The preservation of significant archaeological sites that cannot be avoided by construction takes the form of professional recordation, excavation, or removal, of the site contents, and analysis of the recovered data. Through this process, an archaeological site makes a contribution to the understanding of our past, whether it is from 10,000 years ago or from the 18th century. In this way, the essence of an archaeological site – its information about the past – is preserved, albeit in laboratories, curatorial facilities, technical reports, and more recently, in public-oriented exhibits, booklets, web sites, brochures and signage. In Connecticut, over 100 archaeological sites have been identified through investigations sponsored by CTDOT and preserved in place or through excavation. The sites range from ancient Native American to industrial sites.

How Sites Are Found

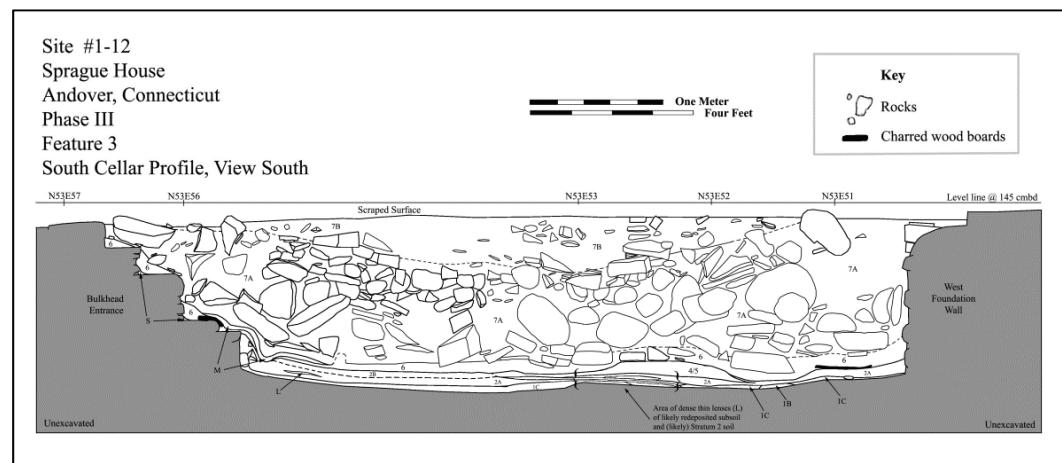
The four 18th-century sites that are the subject of this book were identified

using a systematic methodology that conforms to the standards of the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Every state has a SHPO, which is responsible for ensuring the identification and protection of archaeological and historical resources under its review authority, which includes state- and federally-funded projects. The SHPO standards are in alignment with federal standards. Adhering to the standards is critical, because historic and archaeological resources are irreplaceable, finite pieces of our past. There is only one chance to remove an archaeological site without destroying its information potential and significance. Archaeological sites are like multi-layered trifles, with each layer of fruit, cake, custard and cream representing a different period of time. Put a spoon into the trifle and stir and the layers will become inseparable but will still taste wonderful. Dig indiscriminately into an archaeological site, and layers of hundreds or thousands of years, and their associated stories, will be irretrievably scrambled. A sloppily excavated archaeological site can no longer tell meaningful stories.

People often wonder if archaeologists dig in particular places because they are

looking for something specific. Some archaeologists do – in academic research projects, for example – but that is not the case in transportation archaeology. Transportation archaeology follows the planned improvement project, be it a road-widening or realignment or the construction of a new highway interchange or parking facility. This is because the goal is to identify historic and archaeological resources which may be impacted by the project, not to locate a certain kind of site.

Archaeology is a phased process of discovery. Transportation historical and archaeological surveys start with a Phase IA survey, in which the first step is a paper search: investigating the records of archaeological sites reported to the SHPO or Office of State Archaeology (OSA) and written reports on archaeological surveys conducted in the area; researching historic maps, published histories, and census records; and checking sources for information on environmental factors that may have influenced Native American, Colonial, and later-period use of a project area. The typical result of the initial paper search is a baseline understanding of the potential for buried archaeological sites to be present in the



A profile (side view) of the southern cellar of the Sprague House Site.

project area. Map and other documentary evidence often indicates that houses, mills and/or other structures once stood in the project area. The sites of 18th-century structures are almost never known at this stage because there are very few maps of Connecticut with this level of detail from that period. The background research also provides a historic context within which to interpret any identified sites.



Archaeologists excavating the Benedict Site in Wilton; Route 7 is in the background.

The second Phase IA survey step is an inspection of a project area, in which clues to the presence of buried archaeological sites are looked for, such as foundation remains, old wells, and land contours that are unnatural and may suggest something buried. Even vegetation can suggest archaeological sites: a pattern over a buried cellar or ornamental plants that seem out of place, but which hint at a former house location. Areas of obvious deep disturbance are also noted, such as drainage swales and utility corridors, places where any archaeological remains once present are no longer intact. Disturbed archeological sites have lost their significance, because they have lost their ability to tell stories.

The survey then proceeds to Phase IB: conducting systematic subsurface testing to determine whether archaeologi-

cal remains are present beneath the ground surface. In Connecticut, shovel test pits are excavated at short (30 to 50-foot) intervals across all parts of a project area which appear to be relatively undisturbed. The interval testing is designed to pick up evidence of buried archaeological sites of any type. Supplemental test pits are often placed around artifact-bearing pits, to examine areas of particularly high sensitivity missed by the interval testing, and to explore visible historic sites such as mill remains or cellar holes. Shovel test pits measure 50x50 centimeters (2x2 feet) in plan, and are dug by hand with shovel and trowel in 10 to 20-centimeter levels. All excavated soil is screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wire mesh to recover small artifacts. Artifacts and recovered food remains, such as bone and shell, are cleaned and catalogued in a laboratory and then analyzed to determine whether a potentially significant site has been found. If so, archaeologists return to the project area to conduct intensified testing in the form of Phase II survey.

In a Phase II survey, archaeologists excavate test pits at tighter intervals in the potentially significant site area, usually five meters (15 feet) apart. The goal is to collect enough data to determine what kind of site it is, how big it is, how old it is, and whether it is significant relative to the eligibility criteria of the National Register of Historic Places. At historic-period sites (post-European colonization), intensified documentary research is done in deeds, probates and other sources. If the site is determined to be National Register-eligible, by the SHPO, CTDOT and FHWA, the site must be protected by project redesign unless no prudent and feasible alternative exists, in which case project-related impacts must be mitigated. In the case of archaeological sites, mitigation usually means Phase

III archaeological survey, in which all or most of a site is removed from the impact area; this is the large-scale excavation most people think of when they imagine an archaeological “dig.” A public education component is also usually a part of mitigation. This is because all transportation archaeology is done with taxpaying monies, thus the public deserves to know about the discoveries made about our collective past.

The Four Sites

Four Colonial-period buried house sites and their stories are the subject of this book. The sites include the ca. 1705-1750s Ephraim Sprague House in Andover; the 1712 to 1770s Thomas Daniels House in Waterford; the ca. 1725 to 1775 and ca. 1750 to ca. 1797 Goodsell Houses in North Branford; and the ca. 1713 to 1806 Benedict House in Wilton. All were the homes of “middling sort” Connecticut citizens, meaning they were neither rich nor poor.

Each of the four sites was discovered using the methods just described. In each case, there was no indication before testing that 18th-century houses were ever present: the historical document research turned up no evidence, nor were there any above-ground physical signs. We did know that each area was near Colonial roads, thus we knew that there was the potential for Colonial sites to be present, but there was no way to determine through documents whether a house was actually in each of the project areas. This is due to the nature of 18th-century documents and of Colonial landholding: most of the middling sort in Connecticut were farmers who also practiced a trade. Their houselots were large by today’s typical home standards, and deeds mention houses and barns but never where on the property they stood. Thus we learned from documents that a CTDOT project

was on property owned by Ephraim Sprague in Andover in 1705, but where in the hundreds of acres of land he built his house could not even be guessed except to assume it was somewhat near the Colonial road. It is even harder to identify a house site if a Colonial road has completely disappeared under modern highway construction, as was the case at the 1712 Thomas Daniels House in Waterford, where Parkway South, an access road to I-395, obliterated the old road. Thus, documentary evidence often plays its strongest role in identifying and interpreting house sites after archaeologists find them, as odd as that may seem. This is because once the house sites are found, historians can zero in on who lived there through land deeds; this is especially true when more than one house was on a farmstead, which was true at the Goodsell Site.

You might wonder how archaeologists ever manage to find buried colonial house sites at all, with little direct documentary evidence and so much transformation of the landscape. The systematic, phased testing is the key methodology, because while homelots were bigger than today, houses were often small, much smaller than by today’s standards even for mid-sized modern houses. A Colonial house cellar could be missed by 15-meter-interval testing. But Colonial peoples did something we don’t do today, something that really helps archaeologists find 18th-century house sites: they disposed of their household refuse right out of doors and windows, and let it accumulate in the house yards, because yards were for work, not recreation. Butchering, food preparation and cooking, dyeing of yarn and cloth, washing and other daily chores were all done just outside the house. The poor, the middling and the wealthy all disposed of refuse this way, and used yards as work

areas until the 19th century, when attitudes about sanitation and yard use changed. From then on, refuse was deposited farther away from the house, out of public view, and lawns and ornamental plantings came into vogue. This trend toward hygiene and neatness culminated in the modern age, when household refuse began to be picked up and taken away to landfills. Yards are now social and recreational areas, rather than work zones.

Fortunately, the four sites were occupied in the 18th century, before clean-yard notions developed, thus large, dense quantities of household refuse, including ceramic and glass vessels, metal utensils, nails, window glass, smoking pipes, buttons, buckles, slate pencils, marbles, and food remains were left at the houses for archaeologists to find. Most always these items are in fragments; they were discarded because they were broken and then were often broken further by being trampled in the yard. But the breakage makes no difference to the stories the artifacts tell. Ceramics are usually reliable date indicators (their manufacture dates and export dates to the American colonies and states are known), and their vessel forms tell us their uses as baking pans, milk pans, drinking mugs, teacups and so on. Smoking pipes can be dated by bowl shapes, stem-bore diameter, and sometimes maker's marks. Buttons and some glass are likewise datable. The items archaeologists rarely find are organic materials such as wood, bone, cloth and food remains, because they usually cannot survive in Connecticut's acidic soils. Under certain circumstances, however, organic material preservation can be extraordinary, as at the Sprague House, which had burned: the resultant ash changed the soil pH to alkaline, enhancing preservation of bone, antler and even

eggshells, while caches of grain and potatoes were carbonized from intense heat.

The type, number and distribution of household artifacts reveal quite a bit about the lifeways of the people who lived at these houses, and this information is historically important. Why? Because very little is known about Connecticut's middling sort, the largest segment of the Colonial population. And we know very little because the typical farmer-craftsman family left few diaries – most people were too busy with the business of living to write more than letters or keep records of who owed what in an economy in which hard currency was often scarce. Archaeological excavation of their home sites, combined with historical documentary data, gives a voice to these people, who formed the backbone of Connecticut society.

Colonial peoples also did something else that helps archaeologists find their homesteads: when a house was abandoned, as at the Benedict, Sprague, Goodsell and Daniels sites, the above-ground structural remains were removed, and chimney and above-ground foundation stones were pushed into cellars, along with shovelfuls of yard soil full of household refuse, until the cellars were filled. The cellars were then covered over with soil and the former house sites were converted to agricultural fields in the case of the Goodsell, Daniels and Sprague sites, and into front lawn at the Benedict Site, obliterating any outwardly visible evidence of the houses.

Photographs of the Sprague Site excavation reveal the house burial sequence, as well as its exposure by archaeologists (see pp. 14-15). The first photograph is the middle of a cornfield near Route 6 in Andover, where CTDOT planned the extension of Lake Road to enhance safe driving along Route 6.

Phase IB archaeological test pits found 18th-century artifacts, and a single pit clipped the edge of a buried stone cellar wall. Archaeologists then zeroed in on the spot, peeling back the topsoil to reveal the outline of a filled-in cellar (the outline is the darker soil, a mix of earth, stone and artifacts, a compost almost, amidst the lighter soil of the field). The contents of the cellar were painstakingly removed, revealing the fieldstone cellar walls and bulkhead stairs, along with thousands of artifacts and food remains. The “stripes” visible in the photographs are plow scars from 200 years of farming the land, passing within inches of the cellar every spring, but never knowing it was there.



Winter excavation at the Daniels Site; Parkway South is immediately behind the excavation shelter.

The 1712-1770s Daniels Site was found in the same way, by homing in on test pits of 18th-century artifacts and digging more intensively (in winter, no less) until the house cellar was exposed. The Daniels house was found up against the embankment of Parkway South in Waterford next to I-395, in the footprint planned for the new Exit 81 interchange.

In North Branford, the 18th-century Goodsell Site, which contained two small houses (an “old” and a “new” house), were found in a suburban neighborhood in the only open lot remaining, a field

which was acquired by CTDOT to realign Village Street’s intersection with Route 22, which had become dangerous as traffic outstripped its capacity. In perhaps the most surprising location of all, the ca. 1713 Benedict House was found on the edge of Route 7 in Wilton, surrounded by commercial development and bordered by pavement. Only a portion of the Benedict House site was exposed by archaeologists; the remainder was left buried along the roadside because it was not affected by the road-widening project.

The excavations of the four sites provided valuable information about how people lived in and at their homes in the 18th century, but also permitted the reconstruction of house sizes and configuration. And this data proved revelatory: the houses do not conform to any standing houses in Connecticut; rather, they represent once-common house forms that were gradually abandoned or subsumed into larger houses of the type that are typically considered classically New England: capes, saltboxes, and two-story “colonials.”

Why Does This Matter?

When archaeologists give public talks on colonial house investigations, they are often asked “Why is broken refuse important? Don’t we already know how people lived? Don’t we have enough information from house museums and decorative art museum collections? Isn’t archaeology an expensive way of affirming what we already know?”

The answer is No. As you will learn from the rest of this book, thorough and methodical archaeological investigations, in concert with intensive documentary research, reveal more than can ever be learned from standing houses, museums and diaries alone. There are virtually no diaries from middling-sort Colonial

Connecticut residents. House museums in Connecticut are usually the homes of wealthier people, and they do not present the messiness of the daily lives of the middling sort, who did so much work in “yards.” Museum collections typically include the more refined and expensive objects, which the middling sort did not usually own. There aren’t even any standing houses left to represent the archaeologically discovered houses.

When archaeologists excavate the refuse left at buried house sites, they learn more about the real lives of people than they could by any other possible means. Think about it: if archaeologists were able to excavate 50 years of your accumulated trash, they would know pretty much all about you. When you view museum exhibits, or read a probate inventory or will, it is mostly about a public persona. But what is in people’s refuse, what they throw away or leave behind, reveals all sides of a person. We know from documents, for example, that Ephraim Sprague was a farmer and weaver, colonial militia captain, a deacon in his church, and a local representative to the Connecticut assembly. We know from excavating his homestead that he had a parlor which he likely used in his official public duties, and that his one truly refined possession, a fairly expensive tea set, was probably used in that public capacity. We also know that he cut up brass kettles from which he crafted book clasps and a homemade dovetail saw; he cut up an antler rack to make tool handles; he mended inexpensive utilitarian redware vessels by drilling holes and lashing broken pieces together; he repaired his own windows; and he made his own cloth at home. Ephraim Sprague was more than a captain, deacon, public official, and farmer: he was a Connecticut Yankee, “using it up, wearing it out, making it do or doing without.” The

story of this Yankee, and the Yankee families of the Benedicts, Goodells, and Danielses, is told here.

Sequence of excavation at the Sprague House Site in Andover:



View of the Sprague House area, a cornfield, before archaeological testing began.



The Sprague House buried south cellar exposed in initial archaeological survey; the dark soil represents the filled-in cellar, and a bulkhead stairway entrance is visible to the right.



The south cellar of the Sprague House in the midst of excavation; the bulkhead entrance and steps to the cellar are exposed.



The south cellar of the Sprague House Site fully exposed. The streaks in the ground are scars left by over 200 years of plowing.



Archaeologists excavating the Benedict Site in Wilton. Route 7 is to the left.



Archaeologists excavating the nailery at the Daniels Site in Waterford.

Chapter 2:

Connecticut in the 18th Century

Connecticut in the 18th Century

To understand Connecticut society in the first half of the 1700s, one must first appreciate the important role played by religion. Virtually everyone was at least nominally an adherent of the type of Protestantism brought from England by the Puritan founders of the Connecticut River towns and New Haven. The Puritans favored the preaching of the word of God over ritual and sacraments, grace over good works, and reason over mystery. Perhaps most alien to our modern sensibility, the Puritans regarded the essence of human nature as depraved sinfulness. There was no escape unless God had chosen one for salvation, and no one could be certain whether or not they were destined to be saved.

The basic unit of church organization was a congregation made up of the families in a certain geographic area; legally, congregations were “ecclesiastical societies” established under the general laws of the colony. The societies were operated by lay leaders—deacons and a clerk—with important decisions, such as hiring a



Early Connecticut meetinghouses were intentionally plain and were used for civil purposes, such as town meetings, as well as religious services.

minister, made by a vote of the entire membership. With few exceptions, all residents were required to support the society by means of taxes collected by the local government.

Although they were not priests with sacramental powers, the ministers who served the congregations of Colonial Connecticut played an especially important leadership role. As graduates of Harvard or Yale, the ministers were most often the only college-educated men in the community. Their advice was sought (and given even if not sought) on all sorts of personal and political matters. Most ministers had families and operated a farm to generate income beyond that provided by their stipend, so despite having a knowledge of Classical languages, philosophy, and rhetoric, they also shared in the everyday experiences of their flock.

Evidence abounds that the Puritan outlook was very much taken to heart by ordinary people. To become full members of the church, men and women had to recount their sinfulness in some detail, and the many records of these confessions that have come down to us show that deeply felt spiritual convictions were widespread. Church members also had to “own the covenant,” that is, formally agree with the written beliefs that the congregation had adopted. Many households had no books whatsoever, but when they did, the books always included one or more Bibles and usually a book of psalms or collected sermons.

Death was a familiar presence in Colonial Connecticut. Before modern medicine, infants and young children died at an alarming rate, childbirth was a mortal danger for women, and even healthy adult men could be carried off by

accidents or infectious diseases. Colonial burying grounds were lined with rows of headstones carved with winged skulls, crossed bones, hourglasses, crowns, laurel, and other symbols of the shortness of life, death, and the hope of Christian Resurrection.



Colonial gravestones typically included imagery recalling the inevitability of death and the hope of Resurrection, seen here in the grape vines symbolizing the soul's connection to Christ. In Mansfield Center Cemetery (photograph by B. Clouette).

At first, each town had just one church society, and therefore one meetinghouse and, usually, one burial ground. But as the population increased, separate church societies were set up by the colonial legislature for outlying parts of town. In Lebanon, for example, a second ecclesiastical society was established for the northern part of town in 1716, and this society in turn was divided in two in 1748. Each church society would hire a minister and build its own meetinghouse.

The Puritan emphasis on reading and understanding the Word of God required

a level of literacy, at least for the head of the household, that was previously unheard of. Every town or ecclesiastical society was required to support at least one school where the rudiments of reading and arithmetic could be taught several months of the year. Boys (and girls, if the family wished) received a basic education at public expense, but those wishing to further their schooling typically paid the local minister for tutoring.

The organization of civil society in Connecticut was more complicated. Following the model of Massachusetts, two General Courts were established in the 17th century, one for the river towns and one for the New Haven colony; the two were merged into a single colony in 1662. The General Court acted as a legislature for the colony, passing laws and establishing lower levels of government such as counties and towns. It also commissioned military officers and appointed sheriffs and other officials, and it acted as the court of final appeal in civil, criminal, and family matters. The colonial legislature also played an economic role, granting monopolies, setting prices, and authorizing lotteries.

The executive branch of government consisted of a governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and treasurer. Election of these officers, and members of the legislature, was the privilege of the freemen of the colony. To be admitted as a freeman, a man had to possess substantial property; furthermore, he had to apply in person to the General Court, which met twice a year, alternating between Hartford and New Haven. Because of these restrictions, only a small proportion of adult men were freemen and therefore qualified to vote in colony-wide elections.

For most people, the level of government that mattered most was the

town. Connecticut's first towns—Hartford, Windsor, Wethersfield, and New Haven, as well as other nodes of settlement that were incorporated into the colony early on—were geographically quite large. Over time, additional towns were established by the General Court, either by division of the earlier towns or by dividing up land claimed to have been acquired from Native Americans. The towns were grouped into several counties, primarily for judicial purposes.

The towns were administered by a host of local officials, chief of whom were the selectmen. The selectmen had broad powers to enforce the colony's laws, maintain public order, provide for the support of the poor, and spend the town's money. The selectmen were joined by officials with specific responsibilities, such as the town clerk, who kept records of property transfers, births, marriages, and deaths; highway surveyors, who organized the repair of roads and bridges; hog-reeves, who addressed problems with wandering swine; and haywards, who regulated animals on the town common.

The selectmen and other town officials were elected by the town meeting. The town meeting also authorized major expenditures of town funds, such as construction of a new bridge. Unlike the more restrictive freeman qualification, participation in the town meeting was more widespread; any male head of household who was acknowledged as a town resident could vote at the town meeting and serve in local office.

Historians have called the Colonial New England town a "deferential democracy." Even though most men had a voice at the town meeting, the people who were elected selectman and town clerk tended to be the wealthiest members of the community, and they often

served year after year. People in Colonial Connecticut had a sense of order that led them to choose those who were considered their betters.

The same pairing of democracy and deference could be seen in another Colonial institution, the militia. Although Connecticut was relatively secure from attack, continued struggles with Native Americans and the French caused periodic outbreaks of hostilities to the north in which Connecticut men felt obliged to take part. Each town had one or more train-bands (militia companies) which would periodically gather on the town common or other convenient open ground to practice military maneuvers. The men in each company elected their own officers, usually a captain, lieutenant, and ensign, who were then approved by the Colonial legislature. Almost always, the officers who were chosen were also the most prosperous men in the community. In fact, it was not unusual for a prominent person to simultaneously serve as a selectman for the town, a deacon in the church, and an officer of the militia.

The civil and ecclesiastical institutions of Colonial Connecticut were joined by a third group, the town proprietors. The proprietors were the first group of people to purchase the land, either directly from the Native inhabitants or from a person who claimed the land as a result of purchase or a grant from the Crown or General Court. The proprietors divided up some of the land for themselves and reserved some for common purposes and some for later use. The key benefit of being a proprietor was participation in subsequent divisions of town land. When a proprietor sold land to another person, the buyer did not thereby become a proprietor, but the heirs of a proprietor could claim a share in future

proprietor rights. Eventually, the distinction between proprietor and inhabitant broke down, but for years, towns would on certain days hold three meetings: a proprietors' meeting to discuss the town common lands and possible division of the same; a freemen's meeting; where those qualified to vote for colony offices could make their choices; and the town meeting, in which nearly all householders could participate.

Agriculture formed the basis of the economy in Colonial Connecticut, and outside of a few port cities, nearly everyone was dependent upon farming for their livelihood. Industrial enterprises were small-scale and closely tied to the agricultural economy: gristmills for making household flour and animal feed, sawmills for providing timber, fulling mills for finishing homespun cloth, and blacksmith shops, where local farmers could buy nails, get plows and chains repaired, and have their draft animals shod. A homeowner with a property on one of the colony's few busy roads might establish an inn to serve travelers and local folk. A few educated men might practice the professions of law or medicine. Like ministers, however, lawyers, doctors, millers, smiths, and innkeepers often supplemented their business activities with at least part-time farming.

Connecticut farms in the Colonial

period were small by modern American standards, typically 50 to 150 acres. They raised a great variety of crops and livestock, and they primarily served local needs rather than distant markets. Much of the farmer's effort went into providing hay and feed for the oxen and horses that provided the farm's draft power. Having a year-round food supply was another challenge: smoking and salting meat, turning milk into cheese, and pressing apples into cider were some of the strategies for getting through the winter. Root crops were an essential part of the Colonial diet: potatoes, carrots, turnips, and parsnips could be harvested over an extended period of time and kept for months in a properly prepared pit or cellar. In addition to food, the farm also supplied the flax and wool needed to make cloth for the family's clothing.

There was some opportunity to sell lumber, meat, and livestock, particularly in the West Indies trade. But because Colonial roads were poorly maintained and often impassable to anything but foot traffic, market-oriented agriculture tended to be more viable closer to the shore or the colony's navigable rivers. Farmers who were already more prosperous probably benefitted the most from trade in agricultural products, since they had more land to pasture extra livestock for export.

A lack of trade limited the ability of Connecticut as a whole to buy imports. Nevertheless, most families appear to have had at least a few nice things: a few English tea bowls, an item of clothing made from something other than homespun, or some imported flatware.

Connecticut farming families were largely self-sufficient, but as a community rather than as individual farms. Some families had the teams of oxen needed to plow ground for field crops, while others



had to hire the oxen from their neighbors. A surplus of one kind of produce might be traded to others in the community who had produced less than they needed. Although virtually every household would have the means to spin yarn, not everyone had a loom (and the weaver's skill) to make the yarn into cloth. Farmers also needed the services of millers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and other specialized occupations.

There was little actual money in Colonial Connecticut. The primary medium of exchange was a system of accounts in which transactions, even those as small as the loan of a hammer for a day, were recorded in account books. Periodically, neighbors would get together to balance their accounts, often finding that only a small sum was owed from one party to the other. With no banks in Connecticut until after the Revolution, larger amounts were financed by private loans in the form of personal notes or private mortgages backed by real estate.

The family was the basic unit of Colonial Connecticut society, and the husband-father was indisputably the head of the family. With few exceptions, the husband controlled all of the family's property, even assets brought to the marriage by the wife. If adult unmarried children hired out to work for another family, it was the father who received their wages.

Despite the primacy of the man's position, the members of the family were highly dependent upon one another. Men and women had different spheres, but one was not more important than the other. The hard work of plowing, mowing, and other farm work was the duty of the man, while the woman's work—spinning, sewing, cooking, butter-churning, cheese-making, child-rearing, and countless other daily tasks—ensured

that the family would be well-fed and clothed. A woman who was widowed could not hope to run a farm without the help of adult sons, nor could a man who had lost his wife get by on his own. People who had lost a spouse usually remarried.

Women in Colonial Connecticut were not entirely without rights. When a husband died, the wife was entitled to fully one-third of the estate. The "widow's third" was a way of providing for her support without her becoming directly dependent on her children. The portion of the house and farm that she occupied, however, was not hers to sell: it belonged to her children as heirs to the husband's estate, and should she remarry, she relinquished her rights to the family's property.

Because of the great variety of crops and animals raised on Colonial farms, there were chores for even young children that added to the family economy. At the other end of life, the elderly could



Haying, shown here in a 19th-century engraving, was but one of many physically demanding tasks required of the Colonial farmer.

usually make some contribution as well. Adult unmarried children were an especially productive source of unpaid labor; however, it was important for the younger generation to eventually start families of their own, in part to provide a place for the parents should they grow too frail to live on their own.

Although Connecticut in the early 18th century was an orderly society, it was not entirely static. A major source of change was the migration of people from one place to another. The very first towns in Connecticut were mostly settled by people who came from Massachusetts, and throughout the 17th and early 18th centuries, transplants from the colony to the north were a continuing source of population growth. Some people left western Massachusetts to come to Coventry, Lebanon, and other Connecticut towns after repeated skirmishes with Native Americans made it seem like too much of a wilderness. In other cases, however, it appears that people left because there was relatively more opportunity to own land in the less densely settled towns of Connecticut.

The outlying parts of the original towns of Connecticut, and the areas in between the first nodes of settlement, were gradually filled up through an ongoing process of land distribution and the creation of new towns. Around 1700, areas in the western part of the state that had been previously sparsely settled by the English were opened up; cheaper land and tax abatements provided an incentive to move that was especially attractive to young men just starting their families. Kent, Litchfield, Salisbury, and other places in the northwestern corner of the state took their places beside the colony's older towns. One consequence of the movement is that people began to regard land as simply

another commodity, rather than as a patrimony to be occupied by one generation after another, and neighbors as a constantly changing cast of characters, rather than as an immutable social backdrop.

Another source of change in Colonial society was increasing religious diversity. Because it envisioned church membership as requiring personal confession by adults, Puritanism was inherently unsuited as a religion that could be embraced by all members of society. In 1662, the ministers of Massachusetts and Connecticut came up with a concept that would allow the church to survive into the future without requiring full commitment. Called the Half-Way Covenant, it provided that the children of church members could be baptized and be admitted to the church without having to confess or own the covenant, and their children could also be baptized and attend church services. Only full members, however, could vote on church matters or participate in the Lord's Supper. The ministers hoped that half-way members would eventually have a conversion experience and become full members, but in the meantime, at least they would be attending church.

The Half-Way Covenant worked well for more than fifty years. In the 1730s, however, a religious revival began that reasserted the necessity of personal conversion. Combined with an emphasis on emotional experience and a view of God as more actively involved in calling each individual to salvation, the Great Awakening, as it became known, created a division in churches throughout Connecticut. In some cases, those who embraced the Great Awakening, called New Lights, took over existing congregations and hired ministers sympathetic to their outlook. Other times, the New

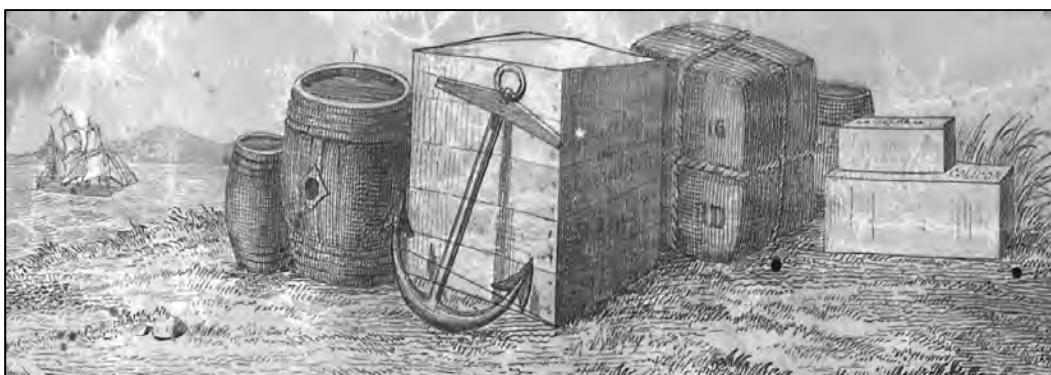
Lights withdrew from an “Old Light” congregation and formed a separate church society. The rancor went on through the 1760s, particularly when a new minister needed to be hired, and even spilled over into politics, as candidates for governor became identified as New Lights or Old Lights.

At the same time that the monolith of the established church was cracking, other varieties of Protestantism began increasing their foothold in Connecticut. Baptists and Quakers had flourished in Rhode Island, where there was no established religion, and eventually extended their influence into New London County in Connecticut. The Church of England, formerly confined to small groups of adherents in the larger seaport towns, also began growing, in part by attracting people who had become disillusioned with the strife in the church societies. Connecticut law still required residents to support the established church with their tax money, but a person could be relieved from this requirement if he contributed to the support of another denomination.

Increased trade with other colonies and, to a lesser extent, with England itself, connected Connecticut ever more closely with the outside world. A growing coastal and West Indies trade increased the market for farmers’ agricultural products and timber, while at the

same time creating wealth that could be used to purchase more manufactured goods. At the middle and upper levels of society, there was an increase in both the amount and the variety of material goods owned by a typical family.

By the beginning of the American Revolution, Connecticut had evolved a long way from the self-contained, pious communities envisioned by Thomas Hooker, John Davenport, and the other Puritan divines who led the early settlers to Connecticut.



Chapter 3:

The Four Sites

The Four Sites

The information in this book primarily comes from four Colonial-Period homestead archaeological sites—the Ephraim Sprague Site in Andover, the Thomas Daniels Site in Waterford, the Benedict Site in Wilton, and the Goodsell Site in North Branford. All were occupied for many years, beginning in the early 18th century, and the families who lived there were all from the middle layers of Connecticut society—neither the richest nor the poorest people in the colony. That said, each site has its own unique history, and to better understand the archeological investigations at the sites, we should also consider what we can learn about them from documentary sources.

For a pre-modern society, 18th-century Connecticut compiled a surprising amount of written information about its residents. Births, marriages, and deaths were recorded by the town clerk, baptisms and church admissions appear in the registers of the various Congregational societies, and transfers of real estate required filing a copy of the deed in the town's land records. Military commissions, judicial appointments, and tavern licenses survive to this day in the state's archives.

When a person died, assuming he or she had enough property to make it worthwhile, the local probate court would arrange for a detailed inventory of the deceased's real estate, clothing, furniture, crops, and livestock. Along with the will (if any) and the record of how the estate's assets were distributed, the inventory was filed with the court. In fact, each probate court not only kept the originals, it also made copies of all the filings and kept them in bound volumes. These records today constitute a valuable resource for historians trying to understand Colonial lifeways; transcripts of a

number of probate inventories directly associated with the four archaeological sites are included as an Appendix.

The Ephraim Sprague Site

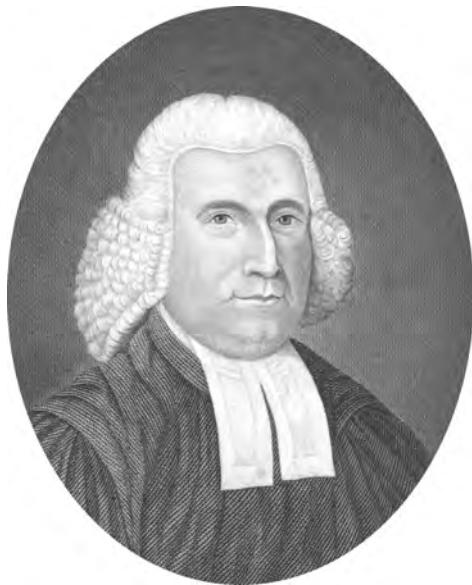
The earliest of the four house sites that were investigated is associated with Ephraim Sprague (1685-1754). The Sprague family came from Duxbury, Massachusetts, part of the Plymouth Colony, where they had settled in 1623. Ephraim's grandfather and great-grandfather were tavernkeepers; grandfather John Sprague was killed by Narragansett warriors in 1676, during King Philip's War. His father, also named John, worked as a farmer, weaver, and "mariner" in Duxbury and also served as a constable, an important local office.

In 1703, John Sprague and his two sons Ephraim and Benjamin relocated to Lebanon, Connecticut, which had been incorporated as a town only two years earlier. John Sprague had only modest landholdings in Duxbury, but in Lebanon he was able to acquire hundreds of acres. He became a prominent man in the community, serving several terms as Lebanon's representative to the Connecticut General Court. He also was frequently elected a selectman, and he was an officer in the local militia company.

Ephraim Sprague followed in his father's footsteps. Rather than acquire land in the central part of Lebanon, in 1705 he purchased a parcel in the far northern part of the town in an area that later became Columbia and then Andover. Ephraim had married Deborah Woodworth, daughter of another Massachusetts transplant, the previous year. Their son Perez, the first of at least eight children, was born in 1705, so we can be reasonably sure they had set up housekeeping in a new house by that point.

Ephraim and Deborah Sprague were founding members of the North Parish of Lebanon, set off in 1722 from the main Congregational society in Lebanon. Ephraim Sprague served as a deacon of the church, overseeing the society's temporal matters and occasionally admonishing church members for questionable conduct. He was a close personal friend of the minister, Eleazar Wheelock, who tutored Native American youth in his study and later founded Dartmouth College.

The North Parish part of Lebanon had its own militia company, and its captain was Ephraim Sprague. In 1725, Sprague's company was mobilized to patrol the border between Connecticut and Massachusetts during a short guerilla-style conflict with Indians that became known as Lovewell's War or Greylock's War. Militia soldiers were to be outfitted at colony expense with arms and ammunition, and soldiers received four shillings a day as their pay. The Treasurer of



Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, minister of Lebanon's North Parish, founder of Dartmouth College, and Ephraim Sprague's friend.

the Colony of Connecticut paid Captain Sprague and his men a total of 83£ 6s (83 pounds, 6 shillings), suggesting at least two or three months of service.

In addition to his responsibilities with the church and the militia, Sprague fulfilled his duty as a leader of the community by holding various political offices, including representative to the General Court and town selectman. In 1743, he was one of the people who successfully petitioned the legislature to divide the North Parish in two, and he thereafter served as one of the deacons in the new Andover parish. All the while, he took care of his farmstead's hay meadows, orchards and sheep pastures, and also wove cloth on the family's loom.

Captain Ephraim Sprague died in 1754 of consumption at the age of 69. Deborah Woodworth had died around 1727, so his second wife, Mary, received the widow's third in his homestead. In his will, Ephraim Sprague left land and money to his four surviving children and made small bequests to his three grandchildren, payable when they reached the age of 21. The bulk of his estate went to his grandson, Ephraim Sprague 3rd, the child of his eldest son, Ephraim 2nd; Ephraim 2nd, known as Lieutenant Ephraim Sprague, had died a short time earlier.

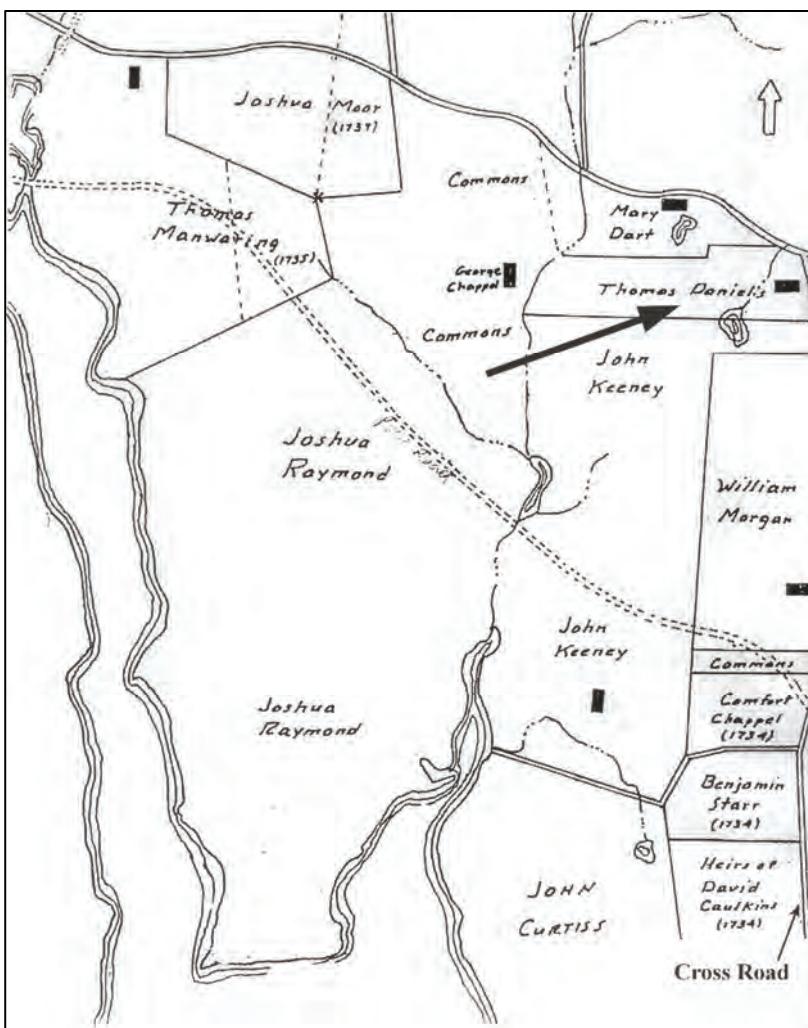
After the death of Captain Ephraim Sprague, his family seems to have dispersed. His widow remarried, one son moved to Union, a more sparsely settled town, and his grandson married and moved to Sandisfield in Berkshire County, Massachusetts. The house disappears from the documentary record not long after his death, and it does not appear on a detailed map of the area prepared in 1781 by engineers of the French Army. The French Army crossed Connecticut from Newport, Rhode Island, to join the

Continental Army encamped north of New York City.

The Thomas Daniels Site

Determining the starting date of an historical archaeological site's occupancy is usually a matter of inference, but in the case of the Thomas Daniels Homestead in Waterford (then part of New London), we have the advantage of Joshua Hempstead's diary. Hempstead was a farmer,

stone-carver, trader, surveyor, carpenter, and justice of the peace who recorded his own activities and those of many of his neighbors in minute detail from 1711 to 1758. In 1712, Hempstead had two carpentry projects underway: an addition to the meetinghouse in New London and a house for Thomas Daniels, a 22-year-old man about to get married. On May 12, 1712, he recorded "Tho. Daniels: boarding it" and two weeks later, "Tho. Daniels: shingling, boarding, etc."



Reconstruction of property lines in the vicinity of the Thomas Daniels House as they were in 1730, by Robert Bucher. Bucher created this map in the 1980s by tracing the properties forward from New London's earliest years of settlement (Connecticut State Library).

The land on which Thomas Daniels's house was a-building was obtained by his future father-in-law, John Keeney; Daniels and Hannah Keeney married on July 2, 1712. The following year, Daniels bought the property from John Keeney, and over the next five years, doubled the size of the farm with additional purchases of land, giving the young family a total of 40 acres.

Joshua Hempstead recorded Thomas Daniels's death in his diary on March 17, 1735, with the notation "died yesterday of pleurisy, sick not one week." The probate inventory of his estate shows a man at his prime (he was just 45) with a modest but productive farm: he had a flock of 18 sheep, 3 pigs, 2 horses, and 6 head of cattle of varying ages. His estate also included 6 oxen, four more than would have been needed for one farm, indicating he was raising them for sale as draft animals or, more likely, as beef for export. Daniels's farm was only a few miles from the port of New London and was even closer to a small tidal inlet just to the south. Daniels also had carpenter's tools, suggesting he had a way of supplementing his farming income.

Not long after his death, and perhaps mindful of the success of his livestock operation, a wealthy New London merchant, Matthew Stewart, bought the homestead from Daniels's children. Of course, Thomas's widow Hannah retained the right to live in the house as her widow's third, but she died in 1744, after which Stewart owned the property without restrictions. Stewart bought other parcels of nearby farmland as well, eventually organizing it as four farms of several hundred acres each. No doubt Stewart hired tenant farmers or farm managers to operate the property, as he continued to live the life of a New London merchant.

In the late 1750s, Stewart went bankrupt as a result of losing several merchant vessels to French privateers in the Seven Years War. Stewart's landholdings were so vast that it was not practical to sell them off at auction, the usual method of handling a bankruptcy, so a lottery was organized. Authorized by the Colonial legislature to sell 12,171 tickets at a price of twelve shillings each, the lottery offered as prizes 54 parcels of land and 2,000 cash prizes.

Despite high hopes, not all of the tickets were sold, and as late as 1767, Stewart still had not discharged all his debts. Some 300 acres (including the former Daniels homestead) came into possession of Benjamin Gorton and John and Richard Deshon, who divided it up into thirds in 1784. Gorton got the part where the Daniels homestead had stood, and for several generations thereafter, the site of the homestead was owned by members of the Gorton family. Judging by the artifacts recovered at the site, the actual Daniels house seems to have disappeared sometime in the 1770s.

The Benedict Site

Shortly after Thomas Daniels built his house in New London, another young man, Benjamin Benedict, built a house 75 miles to the west, in a sparsely settled part of the town of Norwalk then known as Kent. Some seven miles inland, this area became the Wilton parish of Norwalk in 1726 and then the town of Wilton in 1802. We know that the house was built between 1713 and 1715 because Benedict purchased the land without a house on it and sold it with a house just two years later. Benjamin Benedict moved to Ridgefield, an even more outlying area that had been opened up to English settlement just six years earlier.

SCHEME of a LOTTERY,

No.	Prizes.	l.	s.
Bra't forward,		2353	
(13) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
(14) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
(15) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
(16) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
(17) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
(18) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods, 200			
Mr Matthew Stewart, of said New-London, Merchant. The			
said four Farms are Surveyed and Lotted out into Fifty-four			
Lots, for Prizes, by Stephen Hempstead, County Surveyor of the			
County aforesaid; And Planned & Numbered with the quantity			
of Acres in each Lot; and the same Lots have been Apprised			
by the Honourable Hezekiah Huntington, Christopher Avery, and			
Richard Lard, Esqrs. Gentlemen of Undoubted Characters			
and Judgment, at the Sum of £. 9693. Lawful Money, un-			
der Oath; all the said Lots, are well accommodated with Wa-			
ter, and sundry of them adjoins to the Salt Water, where there			
is good Landings, and good Fishing, and Fowling, and good			
Mowing, Feeding & Wood Lands; there are sundry Orchards			
on the Premises, and the Lot No. (1) has a fine Young Or-			
chard of 600 Apple Trees, a good Mansion House well fi-			
nished, Painted and Sash Windows, &c. two good Barns, Corn-			
house, Milk-house, &c. The Lot No. (31) is within two			
Miles of the Sea in New-London; hath a good Mansion House			
and New Barn thereon, with a good Orchard, and almost all			
within a good stone Wall.			
There is on the other Lots, viz. on Four of them, Mansion			
Houses, that whoever draws them may immediately have Houses			
to fit down in, and there is Orchards to each of the said Man-			
sion Houses.			
Every person that draws a Land Prize, and the Lot doth			
not joy to a Road or Highway, shall have Liberty of a way to			
and from his Lot, and have a good Deed Executed by the			
said Matthew Stewart, to each person that shall Draw the Land			
Lots as soon as the Lottery is Drawn and finished.			
In which Lottery there will be no Deduction, and the whole			
Management of the said Lottery, is committed to the Care of			
John Richard, Pagan Adams, and Joseph Colt, Esqrs. all of			
said New-London, by the said General Assembly, who are			
all Sworn to Act faithfully therein.			
The said Lottery is to consist of 205 Prizes, 54 of which			
are Land Prizes, and 2000 Money Prizes, and in order to			
raise said Sums contained in said Prizes, their will be 12,711			
Tickets, at Twenty Four Shillings Lawful Money each, which			
will be less than five Blanks to a Prize; and is supposed to be			
a Lottery of the best Chance for the Adventurers to any that			
has been in this County, viz.			
No.	Prizes.	l.	s.
(1) Contains the Mansion House, two Barns, &c. being 110 Acres	1100		
(2) A Wood Lot, 22 Acres 113 Rods.	170		
(3) Is 11 Acres,	88		
(4) Is 10 Acres,	80		
(5) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(6) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(7) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(8) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(9) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(10) Is 10 Acres,	105		
(11) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods,	135		
(12) Is 15 Acres, 47 & an half Rods,	150		
		48	500
		25	10
		20	
		18	
		16	
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The property's second owner, John Scrivener, stayed not much longer than Benedict. He bought the house and twelve acres of land in April of 1715 and sold the property in February of 1724. Scrivener had been born in Huntington, Long Island, where his father had been induced to move (from Norwalk) because the town needed his services as a weaver. The Scriveners later returned to Norwalk, where John married Deborah Lees in 1710. Deborah's family had earlier left Norwalk for the Philadelphia area, and she and John moved there sometime before 1720.

From 1724 to 1742 the property belonged to John Taylor, a prosperous but by no means wealthy farmer. When he died, his only son, also named John, inherited the farm and lived there until 1774. Various probate records and deeds mention not only a house, but also fruit trees, a barn, and various outbuildings, so it was not just a house but a complete farmstead.

Over the next century, a dozen different families owned the property, most for fewer than five years. Judging from the artifact assemblage, the original house disappeared sometime in the early 1800s. Isaiah Grumman, who owned the property in the 1830s, built a store there, and around 1850, the Greek Revival-style house still standing nearby on the east side of Route 7 was built.

The Goodsell Site

Unlike the changing cast of characters associated with Benedict Site, the Goodsell family occupied their homestead on Route 22 in North Branford from the time of its establishment in 1737 until the 1790s. Samuel Goodsell (1710-1751) was born in East Haven, where his father was a man of some prominence. The family's Branford connection came from Samuel Goodsell's grandfather,

Thomas Goodsell, who was one of the first settlers of Branford. Because of Thomas Goodsell's proprietor rights, Samuel Goodsell's father received land in the north end of Branford when it was divided up in the early 1700s. He also bought from Thomas Foote an additional property nearby, which appears to have had a house already on it. He in turn allowed his son to settle on the land, probably around 1737, the year that he married Mary Hotchkiss; they were almost certainly there by January of 1738, when the birth of their first child was recorded in Branford. That same year, Samuel Goodsell signed his name to a petition asking that the families in the north part of Branford be given the right to form their own church. Samuel Goodsell became the actual owner of his homestead upon his father's death in 1745. He appears to have built a second house there about 1750.

Samuel and Mary had four children between 1738 and her death in 1745 (probably as a result of complications during childbirth). Samuel then married Lydia Cooper, with whom he had two more children, daughters Lydia and Martha. Samuel Goodsell himself died on November 25, 1751, killed by a log at a sawmill, of which he was part-owner.

The probate inventory of Samuel Goodsell's worldly possessions (see Appendix) indicates that most of his time and effort were devoted to farming, with a special emphasis on livestock and apple products, suggesting that he was near enough to the coast to take advantage of export opportunities. He owned a half dozen swine and a small flock of sheep, a team of oxen, two horses, and four head of cattle. The farm was not large, consisting of 32 acres around the house, three of which were used for an apple orchard, and another 14 acres nearby.

Goodsell's inventory is in most respects typical of Colonial Connecticut. Bedding and other linens accounted for a large proportion of his possessions, meticulously described in the inventory according to the type of cloth or weave. Furniture mostly consisted of storage chests, with a few chairs and tables. The Goodsells had saddles and pillions so they could ride their horses about, but the only vehicles were a sleigh and a farm cart. Farming implements included a plow, harrow, threshing flail and basket, hoes, forks, shovels, scythes, and a wide range of pins, chains, wedges, and other tackle. The family had the capability of making their own textiles, since Goodsell's possessions included hatchels,

spinning wheels, swifts, and a loom. Interestingly for a family this far inland, Goodsell retained a couple of tools for harvesting food from the sea: a set of oyster tongs and a cockle riddle, or strainer. Goodsell had a gun and also some netting for trapping pigeons.

Statistically, Goodsell's material wealth placed him slightly above the median of Colonial Connecticut farming families. His family appears to have been comfortable, but to have enjoyed few luxuries. He had four full-sized beds and four sets of clothes, as well as numerous shirts. Only a single pair of silver buttons, the firearm, and a sword suggested any kind of luxury, and one is



Samuel Goodsell's headstone in North Branford (photograph by Kristen Heitert).

tempted to conclude that these (along with the numerous religiously oriented books) were heirlooms from his prominent ancestors. Much of the dinnerware was wooden in composition, with pewter making up most of the balance of eating implements and vessels. A few glass bottles, a single tutenag spoon (a silvery alloy from India), two china plates, and some brassware appear to have been the only expensive, imported items.

The descriptions in the estate papers give some idea of the buildings that made up the homestead. In addition to the two-story main house, there was a second dwelling called the "old house," a three-bay English-type barn, and a hog house. The cider mill mentioned in the estate papers was probably not a separate building but rather a mechanism, the most valuable part of which was an iron screw for the press.

For more than 40 years after Thomas Goodsell's untimely death, the house was occupied by his widow, Lydia, under her rights to the widow's third of his estate. When the enumerator recorded her household for the 1790 federal census, there were two females living there. The other occupant was undoubtedly her unmarried daughter, Martha, who had inherited a third of the house as her part of her father's estate. Both Lydia and Martha Goodsell died in the 1790s, and the surviving family members sold the property. Thereafter, there is no mention of a house at this location; presumably the house was abandoned after Lydia and Martha died. The lot was incorporated into the farmland of neighboring landowners and plowed for field crops, all evidence for the Goodsell homestead lying buried for some two hundred years.

Chapter 4:

House and Home

House and Home

What Were Colonial Connecticut Houses Like?

The houses of Colonial Connecticut were for the most part a continuation of the building traditions that were brought from England by the first colonists. Although the English began settling in Connecticut in the 1630s, only a handful of early-period houses have survived and these have been greatly altered. Archaeology plays an important role in understanding Connecticut's early architecture, including what styles were built, the construction techniques that were used,



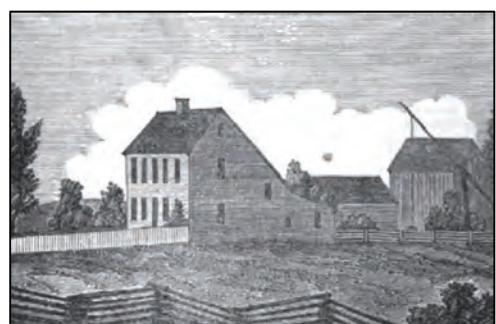
The ca. 1690 Norton House, Guilford. This house was a small one-room end-chimney type with a lean-to off the back.

and how they were furnished. Early Connecticut houses evolved in a variety of ways, but there were several basic types. Although there are no longer any standing examples, a once-common house type was the small one-room end-chimney house, which had one main room called a "hall," and a large stone chimney on one end. The hall was used for cooking, eating and work. One-room end-chimney houses were one and a half stories or two stories with a room on the first floor, and another room, or "chamber," on the second floor that was usually reserved for sleeping and storage. We know from archaeological investigations

and Samuel Goodsell's probate inventory that his "new house" was a one-room end-chimney type with a chamber above; it measured about 16 x 28 feet in size and had a partial cellar below.

The discovery of another cellar at the Goodsell Site corresponds to the "Old House" described in Samuel Goodsell's probate inventory. This house was likely on the property when Samuel Goodsell moved there and functioned as a starter house for the family. It was less valued than the "New House" built about 1750. It was probably also a one-room-end chimney house, though little evidence of the fireplace had survived.

Another common house type in 18th-century Connecticut was the "hall and parlor." The hall-and-parlor house had a center chimney that was flanked by two multi-functional rooms: a hall and a "parlor," which was primarily used for socializing and sleeping. With time, and as families grew, sometimes a hall-and-parlor house was created by expanding a one-room end-chimney house. Some houses had a lean-to addition (also called a "linter") built across the back of the house, which typically served as a kitchen, pantry and work space. A hall-and-parlor house with a lean-to off the back is known throughout New England as a "saltbox," in Connecticut it was also referred to as a "breakback" house.



Typical Connecticut "saltbox" house with out-buildings and well sweep.

The archaeology at the Sprague Site revealed that Capt. Sprague built a house of a type which was brought to America by early 17th-century immigrants from the West Country of England. Called a “cross-passage” house, it was long and narrow, with three main rooms and a large hallway or cross-passage bisecting the house. The locations of the fireplaces, two cellars, and the distribution of the artifacts indicate that the Sprague House was about 70 feet long and 16 feet wide through the main body and 20 feet wide at the northern end of the house. At the southern end was a large pantry for storing food, tools and household goods; a large cellar was underneath, built into ancient dense sand deposits. In the floor of the cellar were found a number of food storage pits, cut into the firm sand. Archaeologists found large quantities of charred corn (maize), oats and potatoes.

There were also eggshells, animal bones, burned dishes, and melted bottle glass; this was good evidence that the Sprague House burned down.

Between the pantry and the large main fireplace toward the middle of the house was a wide cross-passage or corridor. The fireplace heated a large hall. At the extreme northwest end of the house was a parlor heated by a smaller corner stone fireplace. Beneath the parlor, at the north end of the house, was a second cellar, much shallower and less formally built than the southern cellar (see figure on page 51).

The Sprague House is one of only two cross-passage houses documented in Connecticut. The other is the ca. 1641 Desborough-Rossiter House in Guilford, which survives only as a plan drawing made about ten years after it was built. Although none are still standing in Amer-



The excavated south cellar of the Ephraim Sprague House in Andover. The bulkhead entrance had well-made stone steps. In the floor of the cellar were a series of root-vegetable storage pits or “sauce pits,” and the room above the cellar was the pantry.

ica, small one-room end-chimney houses and long and narrow cross-passage houses were once familiar sights on the New England landscape.

Houses were well-suited to the colonists' needs and the environment and were primarily built of the most abundant materials at hand: wood and stone. Log cabins and stone houses were uncommon in Connecticut and most houses were timber-framed. The Daniels House was originally built as a one-room end-chimney type in 1712. Sometime after Thomas Daniels' widow Hannah died in 1744 it was expanded into a hall-and-parlor house. Archaeologists discovered that the addition was built using an ancient and economical construction method called "earthfast" or "post-in-ground." This building technique involved erecting a series of upright wooden posts along the perimeter of the house walls. The outsides of the posts were planed flat and the clapboards were nailed directly to the outside of these posts, which were called "puncheons." Below the floor of the earthfast addition was an oval pit, which was likely used to store food and valuables.

The cellar floor of the Daniels House was sloped to form a sump to drain excess water; the sump functioned even

as archaeologists excavated (see figure on page 51).

A blacksmith shop and nailery (where nails were made) was also attached to the back of the Daniels House, and was also made with post-in-ground construction. This house site is the first evidence of earthfast house construction in Connecticut, a technique which had previously only been documented in Northern New England and in the Chesapeake region.

Archaeological evidence indicates that Colonial houses were built with basic hand-forged iron hardware. Doors were fitted with large sturdy strap hinges and simple thumb latches.

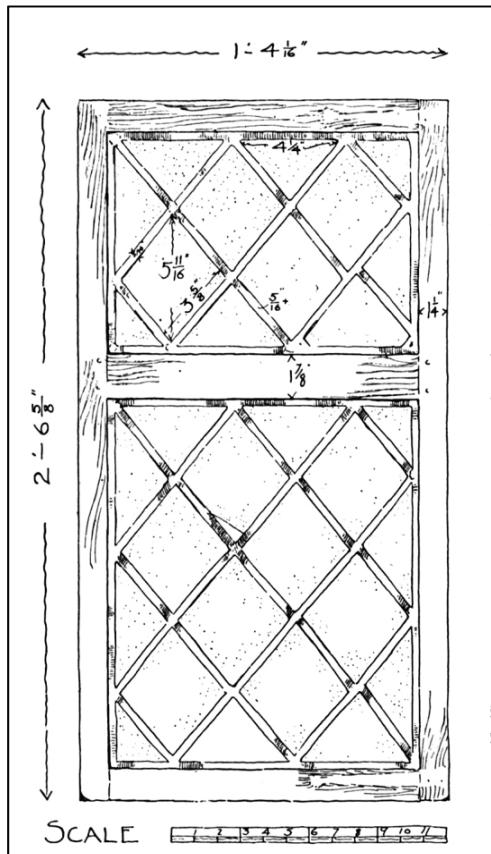


Architectural hardware from the Sprague House, including iron strap hinges, window glass, window leads, nails and mortar.



The Sanders longhouse, an early 16th-century stone cross-passage house in Devon, England. Photograph courtesy of Derek Harper.

Windows were made of small diamond- and triangular-shaped hand-blown glass panes or “quarrels” that were fitted into an iron or wood frame with H-shaped lead fasteners called window “cames” or “leads.” The earliest windows were casement types that opened outward, which were gradually replaced in the 18th century by “sash” windows, with square glass panes set in wooden frames that slide up and down, still in common use today. Colonial window glass was green or blue-green in color and was imported from England. Efficiently mass-produced clear window glass was not available until the late 19th century.



A drawing of a casement window with leaded glass panes or “quarrels.”

Colonial houses typically had a partial cellar underneath that was usually lined with fieldstone. House foundations were also made of fieldstone laid directly on the ground surface. Fireplaces were large and most were made from local fieldstone that was skillfully chipped and split into symmetrical shapes with hammers and chisels. We know from archaeology that fireplaces were mortared with limestone or with local clay mixed with straw. Builders working by the coast or tidal rivers also made mortar by burning piles of seashells and mixing them with sand and sea water. Brick fireplaces were less common because brick was expensive, but many stone fireplaces had brick at the top of the chimney stack, above the roofline, giving the outward appearance of a more expensive brick fireplace. Houses were covered with riven wooden clapboards and roofed with split cedar shingles. Most houses were left unpainted until the 19th century. While traveling with the French Army during the Revolutionary War, the French Abbé Robin described the houses of Connecticut:

Scattered about among the forests, the inhabitants have little intercourse with each other, except for when they go to church. Their dwelling-houses are spacious, proper, airy, and built of wood, and are at least one story in height, and herein keep all their furniture and substance.

How did families furnish their homes?

In the early 18th century houses were furnished much like those of their Puritan ancestors the century before. Furniture consisted of sturdy wooden chairs, tables, chests and cupboards. Carpets, clocks and books were rare, as were forks and knives, and meals were eaten with spoons from coarse earthenware dishes or wood-

en plates called trenchers. One small earthenware dish from the Benedict House site measures six inches in diameter and one inch tall. On the bottom of the dish are criss-cross marks made by cutting food with a knife. Pewter plates



A small earthenware dish from the Benedict House Site. The criss-cross marks on the bottom are from cutting food.

and platters were widely used by middling and affluent families until they were gradually replaced by ceramic plates during the second half of the 18th century. Drinks like “syllabub” and “posset” were made from whipped eggs, alcohol and spices, and drunk from two-handled cups that were passed around the table for all to share. A recipe for syllabub appears in the first American cookbook, published in Middletown, Connecticut, in 1796, which instructed the reader to sweeten a quart of cider with refined sugar, grate nutmeg into it, milk the cow into the mixture, and then top it off with



An English yellow slipware cup (left) and dot-decorated “posset pot” (right) from the Goodsell Site.

cream. Other beverages, such as cider and beer, were served in mugs and tankards made from ceramics, thick leather (called a “black jack”), and wood.



Spoons found at the Sprague House. The handle fragment on the top left is from the 17th century; the remainder date from the early to mid-18th century.

Early American historian Alice Morse Earle aptly called this period “A Wooden Age,” as families utilized a wide variety of wooden tools and containers for their homes and farms. Samuel Goodsell had a “knot dish” and Ephraim Sprague owned a “knot platter,” which indicates that they were made from a tree burls or knots. The twisted grain of tree burls made wooden containers far more durable and less likely to split. Ceramics were mostly imported from Europe, but some families had a few select pieces of imported Chinese porcelain, which was the best-quality mass-produced ceramic at that time. Eventually, all ceramic tablewares would simply be referred to as “China.”

Connecticut forests provided seemingly limitless supplies of fuel and families built large stone fireplaces for heat and light. The most common way to make fire was with "flint and steel." A



European flint ballast cobbles and strike-a-lights. The largest strike-a-light (arrow) was made from a Native American tool of Pennsylvania jasper stone.

steel, or "fire steel," was held in one hand and struck against the sharp edge of a piece of flint called a strike-a-light in the other hand to create sparks. The flint was usually made out of a spent gunflint or from broken-up flint ballast stones brought in the hulls of ships and dumped on the Connecticut shore. The sparks



House furnishings from the Goodsell Site: a brass furniture screw and drawer pull, a piece of mirror glass, and the base to an iron candlestick.

were directed onto a prepared piece of charred cloth or twisted tow. When a small hot ember caught it was carefully added to a bundle of dry tinder and then blown into flames. The burning tinder was then set in the fireplace with kindling made of small twigs and sticks and then,

David Atwater, junr

In NEW-HAVEN,	
A fresh Assortment of Medicines,	
Chemical and Galenical, and most	
Kinds of Patent Medicines, as--	
BAteman's Pectoral and Argol.	
Drops	Clothiers glaz'd Paper
Godfrey's Cordial	Cartridge and Bonnet Paper
Hooper's Pills	Tenter-Hooks
Anderson's do.	Loaf & Brown Sugars
Lockyer's do.	Rum, French and English Brandy,
Turlington's Balsam of Life	Molasses, Teneriff & Tent Wine,
Hill's Balsam of Honey	Surgeon & Surveyor's Pocket Instruments,
Tinct. of Velerian	London and Country Lancets,
Elixir Bardana	Ivory and Pewter Syringes, Urinal,
Frauncies's female, Strengthening Elixir	Small Iron & Marble Mortars,
Greenough's Tincture for the Teeth	Copper & Brass Scales, and Weights, Grain and Money Scales,
Do. for Teeth Ache	Court Plaister.
Essence of Pepper Mint	White & Red Lead,
Golden and plain Spirits of Scurvy Grafts	Spanish White,
Stoughton's Elixir	Yellow Oker,
Essential Salt of Lemons for Punch, &c.	Spruce Yellow,
Doct. James's Fever Powder.	Stone & King's Yellow
A L S O,	India & Vanctian Red
Cinnamon, Mace,	Camine, Drop Lake,
Nutmegs, Cloves,	Rose Pink, Vermilion,
Alspice, Pepper,	Verdegrise & Flake White, Powder and Prussian Blue,
Ginger, Coffee,	Gold and Silver Leaf,
Chocolate, Rice,	Spirits of Turpentine and Varnish,
Spanish Indigo,	Seed & Shell Lac,
Raisins, Figgs,	Annatto,
Tamarinds,	Linseed Oil,
Shot, Wool, Cotton and Clothier's Cards,	4d. 8d. & 10 Nails,
Log Wood,	
Red Wood,	
Do. ground,	
Fullick, Red Saunders,	
Mader, Nutgallis,	
Allum, Copperas,	

Store advertisement of David Atwater, Jr. of New Haven in the Connecticut Journal, 1774. The wide variety of goods sold in this one store was typical of the 18th century.

finally, sections of logs. This painstaking way of making fire was used until the invention and mass-marketing of friction matches in the 1830s. Candles were made mostly from beef tallow, beeswax or bayberry plants, with a spun tow or hemp wick, but they were arduous to make and expensive to buy and were used sparingly. Additional house light often came from burning resinous pinewood splints called "candlewood." Common candlesticks (holders) were made from basic sheet iron such as the ones found at the Sprague and Goodsell house sites.



Literacy artifacts from the Sprague House including (top) brass book clasps, and (bottom) fragment of an eyeglass lens, a lead pencil and a small lead inkwell.

The archaeology provided other important clues to what everyday items were used in the houses and how they were decorated. Such artifacts include brass dresser drawer pulls, fragments of mirrors, or "looking glasses," and fireplace andirons. Brass tacks were used to decorate furniture, leather work and coffin lids. Valuables were secured in boxes with locks and keys.

What games did children play and what was education like?

In 1700 the Connecticut General Assembly mandated that any town with 70 or more families had to hire a full-time teacher. Children attended school until their teens and worked about the house and farm from an early age. There was not a lot of time for play or leisure as there is now. Boys learned to plow, do carpentry, and make tools and girls learned to sew, spin, cook, and tend younger children. Toys and dolls were mostly made from wood and bits of cloth, thus few have survived. Pop-guns, bows and arrows and whistles were whittled from wood with jackknives. Children also played with clay marbles, such as the white one found in the Spragues' cellar. Music was made with mouth harps (also called Jew's harps or jaw harps). The mouth harp seems to have held a special place in early Colonial society as they are commonly found on house sites. An early statute in the Connecticut Colony's Blue Laws decreed that



White clay marble found in the south cellar of the Sprague House. Toys from Colonial sites are quite rare.

no one shall “make minced pies, dance, play cards, or play any instrument of music, except the drum, trumpet and Jew’s harp.” In 1784 Hartford cabinet-maker Samuel Kneeland advertised that he made “backgammon boxes, ches[s] and cribbage boards for sale” in his shop.



Shoe buckles from the Goodsell Site. The brass buckle on the bottom has all its moving parts and is still usable.

Literacy was essential to conduct business and read the Bible, and letter writing and reading were fairly common activities among men and women. Newspapers delivered to taverns kept people apprised of current events, the latest ship

arrivals, death notices, farm sales and lost livestock. Public libraries would not become common until the 19th century. Many families owned a few books, which were usually of a religious theme. Captain Ephraim Sprague owned seven



Small knee buckle from the Daniels Site. Such buckles fastened straps used to hold up men’s stockings when wearing breeches.

books when he died in 1754, including a “great Bible,” a smaller Bible, Isaac Watt’s *Book of Psalms*, William Bevenridge’s *Thoughts on Religion*, and various pamphlets. He also owned an old law book, which he would have used as a selectman for the town of Lebanon, and as a representative to the Colonial legislature. When Samuel Goodsell died in 1752 he owned a “Bible,” a “psalm book” and several “sermon books.” When John Taylor (who occupied the Benedict House) died in Wilton in 1742 he had “four small books” listed in his probate inventory.

A number of artifacts related to literacy were found at the house sites. At the Sprague House a lead pencil and a pewter inkwell were discovered, and at the Daniels Site a slate pencil and the top part to a traveling inkwell, with a small blade for trimming the nibs of quill pens,

were found. Ink powder could be purchased from merchants or made at home. Brown ink was made by boiling down walnut hulls and black ink was made from the soot residues on cooking pots. Because books were expensive they were often securely closed with brass clasps, such as the ones found at the Sprague and Goodsell houses. Eyeglasses or “spectacles” for reading were in use before the 18th century and pieces of glass lenses were also found at the house sites.

What types of personal items were found?

Clothing accessories made of metal, bone and glass can be preserved for centuries in the ground under the right conditions. Buttons, buckles and straight

pins were often coated with a thin layer of tin by craftsmen, which made them somewhat resemble pewter or silver, and the tin layer protected clothing from corrosive copper staining. More prosperous families might have a few silver accessories, but ostentatious displays of wealth were generally considered improper. In Samuel Goodsell's probate inventory was listed “a pair of silver buttons” (cufflinks) valued at £1. A fragment of a silver shoe-buckle frame, expertly repaired, was found at his house site. A whole pewter buckle from the Daniels House has no moving parts and was purely for decorative purposes; it may have been used to decorate a hat.



Coins from the Daniels Site. Top row left to right are a lead token, a 1723 George I Irish halfpenny, and a 1722 George I Rosa Americana halfpenny. Bottom row left to right: a very worn French Louis XIV Liard, minted 1655-1658, and a 1733 George II “young head” halfpenny.

A rather common clothing item found on house sites are buttons, which range from plain and simple pewter ones cast in molds to more elaborate embossed buttons skillfully brazed together from several pieces of metal. Shoe buckles and knee buckles were plain, elaborately decorated with embossed designs, or inlaid with glass gems. Men's "sleeve buttons" or cufflinks were also decorated with glass gems or engraved with a variety of designs. Early cufflinks tend to be round or octagonal in shape, with oval ones also becoming popular by the mid-18th century.

Large round or faceted beads were used in women's necklaces and bracelets. Smaller beads were used for crafts, such as making small purses, or were incorporated into embroidery. In the 18th century, Venice, Bohemia (Czechoslovakia) and the Netherlands were the major exporters of glass beads.

Hair combs were made from bone, ivory, and metal. Colonial combs were very practical and had two sizes of teeth: large, for grooming, and small, to remove nits and lice from one's hair. From the Benedict House excavations came a complete straight razor for shaving. In the 18th century a clean-shaven face was the fashion. Samuel Goodsell owned a razor that was valued at four shillings.

Hard currency was always in short supply and was susceptible to inflation. Although British money was naturally the most common, there was no standard currency in the colonies and coins from other European countries were also used. In the early Colonial period bushels of dried corn, lead musket balls, fur pelts and Native American shell beads called "wampum" were used as mediums of exchange. Individual colonies also had their own currencies with their own values, which often made business transaction complicated. Because of coin



Men's cufflinks, or "sleeve buttons," from the Sprague Site. Cufflinks were often inlaid with glass "gems" or were engraved with floral and geometric motifs, the same types of symbols commonly found on grave-stones. A cornucopia or horn-of-plenty symbol (far left) dates back to Ancient Greece and symbolizes bounty and nourishment.

To remove wrinkles from garments, clothing irons were used, such as the one found at the Sprague House. Made from a solid piece of iron (the handle is missing), this type of iron, sometimes called a sad iron, was heated in the fire and then pressed along the clothing. The trick was to not let it get too hot and scorch the fabric.

shortages most business transactions were carried out on paper and customers could often get store credit from merchants in exchange for certain high-demand products like beeswax, honey, and the "country produce" from their farms. Most of the coins found on Colonial house sites are of small denominations, the halfpenny or "copper" being

the most common. Coins were not so much valued by their country of origin or denomination as they were by the confidence people had in the quality of the copper or silver they contained when minted. In 1722 Great Britain produced "Rosa Americana" halfpennies, like the one found at the Daniels Site, especially for the American colonies. It was soon realized, however, that the minter had used inferior alloys in order to increase his profits. Rosa Americana coins were noticeably lighter and of poorer quality than their British counterparts and were not popular.

Because coins often remained in circulation for generations, they typically were worn smooth before they were lost. Part of a small and worn silver Spanish "real" coin was found at the Sprague House. Spanish silver reales were sometimes cut into pie-shaped sections. The silver Spanish dollar, or peso, was made up of eight pieces or reales, and remained a global currency standard for hundreds of years. The Spanish silver dollar was

dollar). From the Daniels Site came a small French copper Louis XIV Liard coin dating from 1655 to 1658, which indicates it had already been in circulation for a half-century before the house was built. Merchants sometimes made their own lead tokens which they would accept at a set value.

A practice adopted from Native Americans, tobacco smoking became commonplace in the early 1600s. Dozens or even hundreds of tobacco pipe fragments are typically found on Colonial house sites. Most tobacco pipes were made from a white clay called kaolin, a name derived from the Kao-ling village in the Jiangxi Province of China, although most tobacco pipes found on 18th-century sites in Connecticut were made in England. Tobacco pipes are especially helpful to archaeologists because they preserve very well in the ground and they can be dated in a number of different ways, including by changes in the shape of the bowl and by a narrowing of the bore diameter of the stem over time.



Tobacco pipe fragments from the Sprague House. The black pipe bowl on the left burned in the house fire.

officially accepted as currency in the United States until 1857. The expression "two bits" for a quarter comes from the Spanish silver dollar, as two pieces of eight were equivalent to one quarter (of a

Because tobacco was initially expensive, tobacco bowls were small. Over time, as tobacco became widely cultivated in the Americas and therefore much cheaper, tobacco pipe bowls grew larger. Because

the bowls became larger and therefore hotter, the pipe stems had to become longer and the bore narrower to cool the smoke.

Tobacco pipes can also sometimes be dated by a maker's initials stamped onto the pipe. For example, tobacco pipes stamped with the "RT" mark at the Sprague Site are attributed to English pipe-maker Robert Tippet who worked between the years 1678 and 1720.

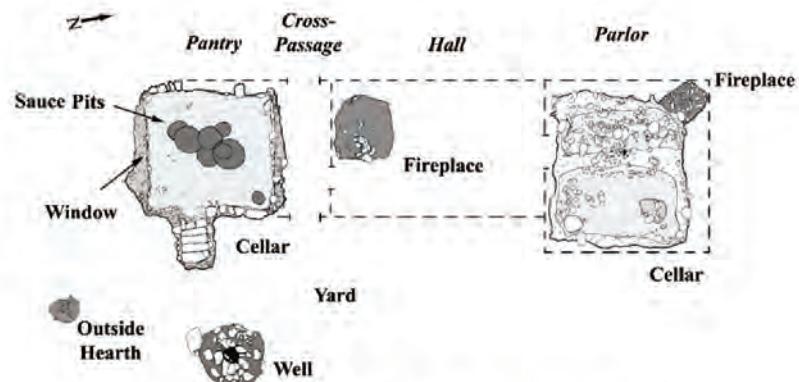
While Virginia tobacco was considered the best, some tobacco was grown locally in Connecticut in the 18th century and sold as "New England tobacco." Most of it was cultivated in the Connecticut River Valley, as it still is today. In the mid-18th century Connecticut merchants advertised tobacco pipes in "long and short" varieties, likely relating to the length of the stem, with longer stems more valuable. Augustus Deley, a "tobaconist" from New York, sold "all sorts of Tobacco" in Hartford in 1766, including "fit for chewing, or smoaking; such as Hog-Tail, Pig-Tail, and Shagg in papers, or by the Pound." As a gentleman, Captain Ephraim Sprague also owned a "tobacco box" valued at two

shillings, and a pair of ember tongs for lighting tobacco pipes was found in the parlor area of the Sprague House site.

Several pieces of yellow sulfur or "brimstone," were found at the Daniels House site. Sulfur is a naturally occurring element that had a variety of practical uses in Colonial homes. It was ground up and mixed with tallow as a balm to treat a variety of skin ailments including "the itch." Indeed, sulfur soap can still be purchased today. When burned, sulfur smoke was used as a fumigant. Empty cider barrels were treated with the smoke between seasons to kill mold and other residues. Sulfur is also an ingredient in gunpowder.



Various tobacco pipes from the Daniels Site.



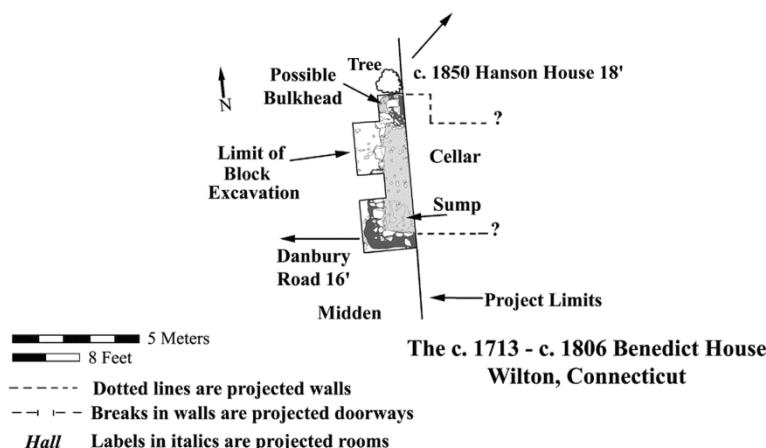
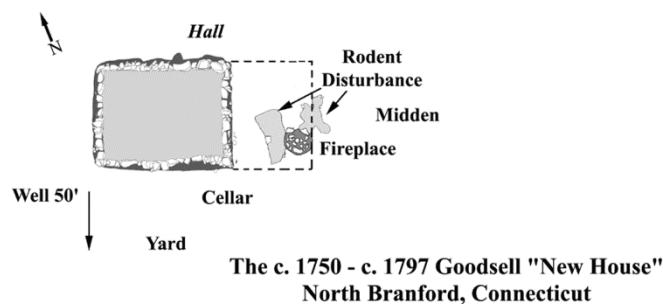
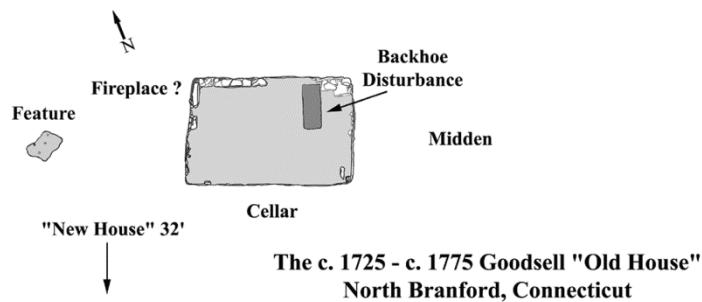
The c. 1705 - c. 1750s Sprague House
Andover, Connecticut



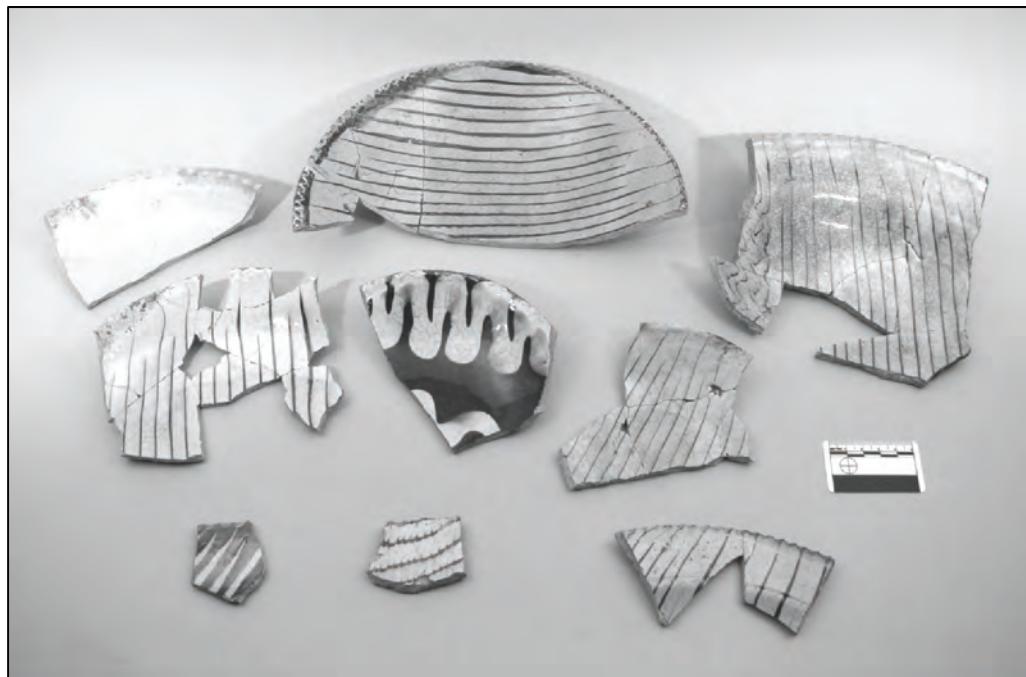
The 1712 - c. 1770s Daniels House
Waterford, Connecticut

- 5 Meters
- 8 Feet
- Dotted lines are projected walls
- Breaks in walls are projected doorways
- Hall* Labels in italics are projected rooms

Archaeological site plans of the Sprague House and Daniels House with projected walls and rooms.



Archaeological site plans of the Goodsell Site "Old House" and "New House" and the Benedict House with projected walls and rooms.



Various slip-decorated red earthenware dishes from the Goodsell Site.



Household items from the Sprague House. From left to right are a clothes iron, the post to a fireplace andiron, an iron candlestick shaft and a lock for a box.



Sprague House buttons. The simplest are one-piece pewter cast in molds. The more elaborate are made from several pieces of embossed sheet metal brazed together. The bottom-row buttons are glass.



Personal items from the Sprague House. George II "old head" halfpenny (1740-54), George I 1723 "Wood" halfpenny, William III 1699 halfpenny, a piece of a Spanish silver "real" coin, a brass finger ring, a brass token stamped "IB," an iron mouth harp, an ivory comb fragment and a bronze comb fragment.



Map of Connecticut by Moses Park, 1766, showing town and county boundaries (Library of Congress).



The beginning of the excavation of the south cellar or “New House” at the Goodsell Site.



The final stages of the excavation of the south cellar or “New House” at the Goodsell Site.



Ceramics from the Daniels Site. Top row left to right: an English white salt-glazed stoneware tankard and three Westerwald tankard rims. Second row left to right: Royal pattern creamware plate, blue-decorated delftware plate, blue hand-painted Chinese porcelain plate. Bottom row left to right: delftware bowl, Chinese porcelain bowl, and two English yellow slipware cups.



Glass from the Daniels Site. Top row left to right are a liquor bottle neck and mouth, shoulder and mouth of a small fluted bottle and a wide-mouthed bottle. Second row left to right: two enameled glass fragments, one with a bird's head, an air-twist stem for a drinking glass and a tumbler base.



A dot-decorated English yellow slipware posset pot from the Goodsell Site. This vessel has two handles so it could be easily passed around the table for all to share.



Lead-glazed red earthenware baking and serving dishes from the Goodsell Site.



*Various glass beads
from the Sprague Site.*



Sewing items from the Sprague Site, including shears, embroidery scissors, straight pins, thimbles, needles, and the cap to a bone needle case.



Personal items from the Benedict Site, including part of a bone comb, a mouth harp and a razor.



Personal items from the Daniels House. Lenses for eyeglasses or "spectacles," a pen knife that was also a cap to a traveling inkwell. On the bottom is a slate pencil, a piece of sulfur and a bone comb.



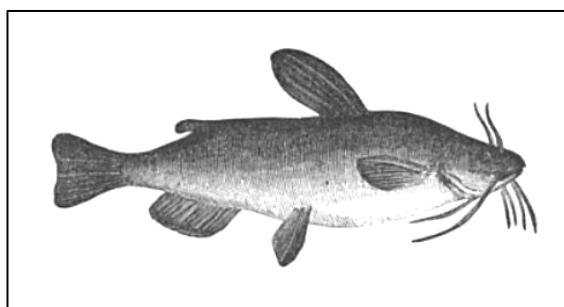
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Gun and hunting-related artifacts from the Sprague Site. The two top rows are gunflints (the one on the second row, left, is French, the remainder are English). On the third row are musket balls. On the fourth row is lead shot made from casting in molds, dropping liquid lead through a sieve in water (called Rupert's shot) and by rounding small cut cubes (called tumbled shot). On the bottom are a lead gunflint sleeve (to secure the gunflint in the hammer), a brass sideplate with a serpent motif, and the brass tip to a bayonet scabbard.



The catfish, also called the "horn-pout" in New England, was a common eating fish.

Chapter 5:

Supplying the Family Larder

SUPPLYING THE FAMILY LARDER

Where did families get their food?

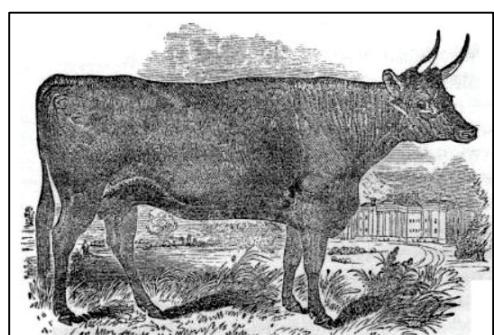
Families in 18th-century Connecticut typically raised most of their food and the seasonal life cycle revolved around plowing and planting in the spring and

into a variety of sturdy and waterproof containers used to store gunpowder, tinder, salt, and rum. Pairs of well-trained oxen provided the main source of farm power and were used for plowing, harrowing and hauling the seemingly endless “crop” of rocks that surfaced in



An early photograph of a Connecticut farmer harrowing his field with oxen. Notice that he is reading a book while leading the team.

harvesting and butchering in the fall to produce enough food to carry them through the winter months. The tablewares, animal bones, and charred nuts and seeds archaeologists discovered at the house sites demonstrate that the diet of Connecticut families was diverse and indicate which foods were produced at home. Cattle were the most important livestock on a Connecticut farm. Cattle provided beef, which could be salted and stored in barrels, cowhides were the main source of leather, and horns were made



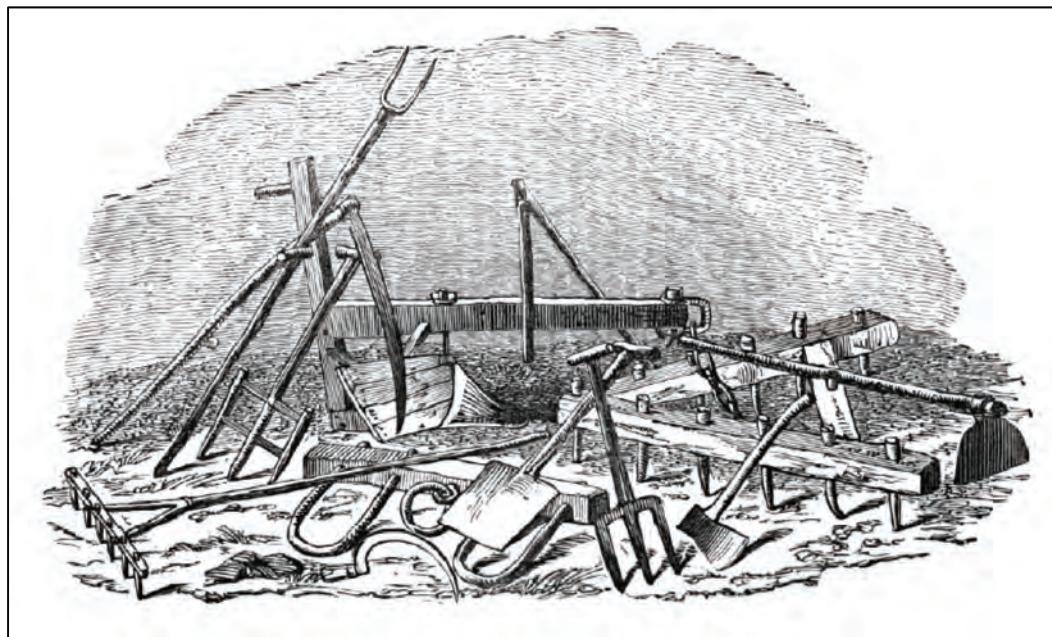
A Devon cow. They were among the earliest cattle breeds brought to New England.

fields every spring. When Thomas Daniels died in 1735 he owned three pairs of oxen, his most valuable possessions beyond his land and house. Needing only a single pair to farm, Thomas may have specialized in raising oxen for sale or lease as draft animals, or as beef for export, which his proximity to the port of New London would have facilitated.

When his wife Hannah died nine years later, her cow and calf, valued at £13 & 10 shillings, were her most valuable possessions.



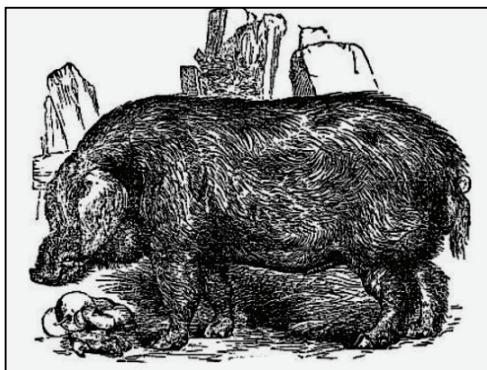
Mended sherds of a large earthenware milk pan from the Goodsell Site. Milk was put in the pans to separate the cream as it cooled.



Typical farming tools of the 18th century, including various forks, rake, sickle, scythe, plow, ox team yoke, axe, hoe and harrow.

Wide and shallow earthenware milk pans are typically found on Connecticut house sites because dairying was an important activity, usually done by the women of the house. Milk pans were used to separate the cream, which floated to the top and was skimmed off and used to make butter. Cheese was also made; "Connecticut cheese" had a reputation for high quality and was shipped to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and beyond.

Pork was also an important staple in the New England diet. Pigs required little maintenance, could be fed scraps, and were kept in pens or simply let loose on small islands to fend for themselves until butchering time in the fall. Each town elected a "hog-reeve," who made sure roaming pigs did not run rampant and destroy neighbors' crops. In the fall the animals were butchered and the meat was salted and packed into barrels to last through the leaner winter months. Surplus salted pork was shipped to the West Indies. Samuel Goodsell's "hogs house" was valued at £10.



An English hog. Salt pork was a staple of the Yankee diet.

Unlike pigs, sheep required considerable care and well-fenced fields to graze. Flocks were generally small until the 18th century when local wolf populations were exterminated. Archaeology indi-

cates that mutton was the third most important meat for Connecticut families. Besides mutton for the dinner table, sheep provided wool, an essential fiber for warm clothing and blankets. At the times of their deaths, Thomas Daniels owned ten sheep and eight lambs; Ephraim Sprague owned 13, as well as a "sheep bell" (used to locate ewes that wandered too far off); John Taylor (at the Benedict Site) had 18 sheep; and Samuel Goodsell had 13, which provides a good idea of the size of a typical flock at this time.

Chickens roamed Colonial yards and were raised for their meat and eggs. Domestic geese were also kept for food and for their feathers, which were used for writing quills, and their fluffy down was stuffed into mattresses to make cold winter nights bearable.

The wild turkey is native to North America. Remarkably abundant when the first colonists arrived in New England, they were an especially important food source. Interestingly, wild turkeys were introduced into England from America by the mid-1550s, were domesticated in Europe, and were later brought to New England by newly arriving colonists. By the late 18th century domesticated turkeys were common; but wild turkey had become virtually extinct in Connecticut from over-hunting. In the 1970s wild turkeys were reintroduced into Connecticut and are now thriving.

A number of artifacts from the Sprague Site are related to farming, including an iron "nosing" or blade edge for a wooden spade and an iron ring for a scythe handle. Scythes had long curved blades fitted to a long handle and were used to mow crops such as hay and wheat during harvest time. Large iron spikes or teeth were fitted into heavy timber-frame harrows and then dragged across fields by teams of oxen to break up the soil.



Iron farm tools from the Sprague House. From left to right are a livestock bell, a handle to a scythe and a harrow spike. On the bottom is a blade to a wooden spade.

The plant-food remains discovered at the house sites are a mixture of ancient European grains like wheat, oats and rye, and foods adopted from Native Americans such as corn, beans, squash, and pumpkins. Corn, or maize, was the most abundant and most important crop planted by Connecticut colonists. Wheat often did not grow well in New England and it was susceptible to blights like the “Hessian Fly,” which was inadvertently introduced by mercenary soldiers during the Revolutionary War. Corn, on the other hand, was hardy, easy to grow, and was the most versatile, as it could be used to feed people as well as livestock. From the Daniels Site is a blade to a wood-handled corn knife that was used to cut down cornstalks after the harvest.

The corn knife is a uniquely American tool; it had handles 1½ to 2 feet long, and the blade faced upwards. Farmers would cut the corn at the bottom of the stalk by simply pulling up as they walked along the rows.

Charred potatoes discovered at the Sprague House may be the earliest known examples from New England. Potatoes were first cultivated in South America by Native peoples and introduced into Europe by the Spanish, even-

tually making their way to Ireland. It was probably families of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who first introduced the potato to New England when hundreds emigrated in the 1720s.

Some families, like the Danielses and Goodsells, had their own orchards. Hard apple cider was the most popular drink throughout New England, and the Goodsells even had their own cider mill to crush the apples before they were squeezed in a press to extract the juice. Cider mill machinery was usually powered by a horse and it took about three hours to grind a cartload of apples. The apple juice was then fermented in barrels. When Samuel Goodsell died in 1751 the family had barrels of boiled cider, raw cider and a “cider beer.” To pollinate their fruit trees the Goodsells had bee-hives, which were also useful for the honey and wax they produced.

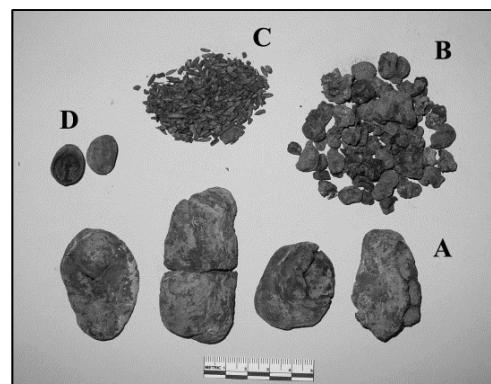


A corn knife from the Daniels House. This uniquely American tool was used to cut corn stalks after harvest.



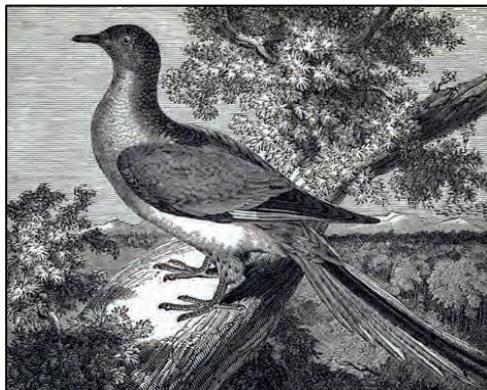
An old photograph of Connecticut farmers working a horse-powered cider mill. The mechanism ground up the apples which were then pressed to extract the juice. The Goodsell's cider mill may have looked a lot like this one.

Charred seeds and nuts from the house sites tell us that families gathered blackberries, huckleberries, wild grapes, hazelnuts, hickory nuts and butternuts. Families also hunted, trapped, fished and gathered shellfish to supplement their diets, especially during the winter months. When Ephraim Sprague moved to Lebanon and married Deborah Woodworth in the early 18th century, much of Connecticut's interior was still wilderness. Archaeologists discovered that the Spragues ate black bear, white-tailed deer, beaver, skunk, muskrat and wild-fowl such as turkey, bobwhite and ruffed grouse. In the 18th century gray squirrel was a very popular food throughout New England. Noah Webster, the author of America's first dictionary, described them as "delicate food." The bones of passenger pigeons have also been found on Colonial house sites in Connecticut.



Charred plant foods from the Sprague House. These include A) potatoes, B) corn, C) oats and D) a hickory nut. These may be the oldest potatoes ever discovered in New England.

The Goodsell family had a "pigeon net" to catch flocks of passenger pigeons. The birds, which were once found in enormous migratory flocks, were hunted to extinction in the early 20th century.



The passenger pigeon once lived in massive migratory flocks across the Northeast. They were common fare on the colonial dinner table, but were hunted to extinction in the early 20th century.

The bones of land and aquatic turtles, including snapping turtle, were also found at the house sites; turtle was often made into soup. Even small birds the size of sparrows were caught and roasted on spits or baked into pies.

Wild game was especially welcome during the long winter months when fresh meat was scarce and the larder became low. Every able-bodied male (with some exceptions) between the ages of 16 and 60 was required by law to serve in their town militia. Each man was to report for training once a month with a “well-fixed musket,” a bayonet or tomahawk, gunflints, gun powder and musket balls. If a man was too poor to buy a gun, the town was required to provide him one to use. Training day would sometimes include a contest of “shooting at marks” or targets for a small prize. When Thomas Daniels died in 1735 his probate listed “one gun” valued at £1, and in 1752, when Samuel Goodsell died, he owned a musket valued at £10, as well as four powder horns, 6½ pounds of lead, a sword and belt, and a cartridge box (a kind of shoulder pouch used to hold ammunition). As a militia captain, one of Ephraim Sprague’s duties was to

inspect militiamen’s equipment and fine those who were not prepared for duty. By the time he died in 1754 in his late 60s, Ephraim no longer owned a gun.

Lead shot and musket balls were found at the sites in various sizes or calibers and were made in several different ways. Lead shot was cast in molds, made by dropping molten lead through a sieve into water or by laboriously cutting thin strips of lead into small cubes and then rounding them. Lead shot was also purchased from merchants and was sold according to the size of game being hunted like “squirrel shot,” “pigeon shot,” “beaver shot,” and “buck shot.” At the Sprague Site there was also a brass gun sideplate fragment with a stylized “serpent” motif, musket balls and assorted gunflints of English and French manufacture.



Late 18th-century drawing of a hunter drawn by a prisoner at Connecticut’s Newgate Prison.

Both fresh and saltwater fish were an important part of the diet and fishing tackle, including fishhooks, lead sinkers and lead net weights, were found at the house sites. Fishhooks were sold in various sizes according the type or size of fish they were intended to catch. For example, some of the fishhooks Connecticut merchants sold were “cod,” “mackerel,” and “black fish” hooks. Living near the port of New London, the families living at the Daniels House ate striped bass and sturgeon. The bones of eels and freshwater bass were found at the Sprague House, and most families seem to have eaten sucker fish, which congregated in rivers in great numbers in the spring to spawn. Catfish, or “hornpout” as they are traditionally called in New England, were also commonly eaten.



Fishing tackle from the Daniels House, including hooks and a homemade lead sinker.

Families consumed prodigious amounts of shellfish, especially oyster and quahog, which were easy to harvest or inexpensive to purchase. The Goodsell family in North Branford, seven miles from the shore, harvested shellfish themselves and owned a “cockle riddle” (a kind of sieve) and “oyster tongs.” Many thousands of shells were found, of oyster, quahog, whelk and scallop.

How did families preserve and store their food?

Before the invention of refrigeration families spent a lot of their time preserving the food they raised. Most families had a cellar under their house, though sometimes a separate cellar was built into a nearby earthen embankment. House cellars were usually lined with fieldstone to keep the sides from collapsing and were accessed through a trapdoor in the floor or through an outside bulkhead entrance, like those discovered at the Sprague and Daniels houses. The main purpose of the cellar was to keep food cool in the summer and dry and protected from freezing in the winter. To insulate cellars during especially cold weather, dried leaves, straw or seaweed was piled against the outside of the foundation walls and on the bulkhead door for insulation. This was called “banking” a cellar.

In 18th-century New England, root vegetables such as turnips, parsnips, carrots and potatoes, were called “sauce,” or “sass” for short. Root vegetables were stored in cellars, and as discovered at the sites, families also sometimes stored their “sauce” in holes in the ground that were lined with straw or boards and then mounded over with hay, earth, and manure for insulation. Such food-storage holes or “sauce pits” were found in the floor of the Spragues’ main cellar and in the yard of the Daniels House. Sauce pits were typically two to three feet deep and two to three feet in diameter and shaped like an inverted bell. Potatoes stored in sauce pits were considered by some to taste better than those stored in cellars. In the 19th century, as more varieties of crops were grown and harvests became bigger due to improvements in fertilizing and farm machinery, house cellars also grew in size.

Many foods were stored, shipped and sold in barrels made of wooden staves secured with iron or hickory hoops. Some of the common volume measurements were the “gallon,” the “firkin” (8 gallons), the “kilderkin” (2 firkins), the “barrel” (2 kilderkins), and the “hogshead” (2 barrels). One and one-third hogsheads equaled a “tierce,” although there was no strict standardization and measurements sometimes varied from place to place.

Sherds of ceramic storage vessels were found on the house sites. Butter and lard were often stored in earthenware pots, and acidic liquids like vinegar, pickling brines and fruit preserves were best kept in salt-glazed stoneware ceramic vessels, which were impervious and highly durable.

While barrels of salted meat, cider, beer, various vegetables and butter were stored in the cellar, dried grains, beans, peas, and herbs were stored high and dry in the loft of the house, called the “garret.” Ephraim Sprague owned a “cedar meat tubb,” which was a large vat used to prepare hundreds of pounds of meat at a time for preservation. Boneless cuts of beef or pork were rubbed with salt and prepared for packing in barrels. Chunks of pork belly were cured to make the Yankee staple of “salt pork.” Sometimes allspice, pepper and cloves and other spices were added to salted beef to give it more flavor. The dish of “boiled corned beef and cabbage,” also called “New England boiled dinner,” is from this tradition. Sides of beef and pork were also brined and smoked by hanging them up in big chimney flues to slowly cure. A pork leg that was brined and then smoked was called a “gammon.”



A partial earthenware storage pot, from the Goodsell Site, the type used to store butter, lard and other foods.

How did families prepare their food?

Hearth cooking required special skills as well as physical strength. In Colonial Connecticut the most common cooking techniques were roasting on spits, boiling, frying and baking. Archaeology provided a lot of details on how cooking was done and what kitchenwares were used. The most common types of iron cookware were pots, kettles, skillets and “spiders” (skillets with long feet). Pots and kettles were typically advertised as “Iron Hollow Wares” in “small, middling and large” sizes (pots are bulbous and constrict at the neck and kettles have straight sides that flare out at the rim). Despite being cast from iron, they could crack or break if dropped, and such fragments are found on house sites. Iron pots and kettles usually had three feet, two ears, and a bale, or handle. The feet allowed the vessel to sit above the hot coals. They were also hung from the fireplace lug-pole by adjustable trammels or from sturdy S-shaped hooks. Large kettles were used outside for dyeing

cloth, making soap, butchering, and boiling down maple sap.



The discovery of an iron pot fragment buried in the bottom of the cellar of the Daniels House.

Archaeologists have found that foods were also baked in two basic types of earthenware vessels: shallow pie plates and deep-sided pudding pans. These ceramic vessels have distinct black scorch marks on their exterior surfaces, evidence of baking. Some of the most common baked dishes were meat and fruit pies, including chicken pie and apple pie, which are still popular today.

Little was left to waste in a Colonial kitchen, and all types of livestock bones were found in the house middens, including from the heads and feet of animals. The first American cookbook described how to prepare beef tongue pie, boiled calves head (head cheese), and a minced pie made from ox hooves, suet and apples. Tarts were made from a variety of fruit, including apples, cranberries and gooseberries. Gingerbread and custards were widely eaten throughout New England. Earthenware baking and serving dishes were often decorated with dots, and combed and trailed motifs in yellow, red, green and brown.

Water for cooking and washing was obtained from dug wells that were usually lined with fieldstone. The Spragues' well was discovered just 19 ½ feet away from the pantry, but Lydia Goodsell's well was a good 50 feet from her house.

Water was extracted from wells using a simple well "sweep" which was a long wooden pole that swung on a horizontal fulcrum fixed to a forked post set in the ground. With this simple lever one could easily raise and lower a bucket in a well for drawing water. More prosperous families might have a wooden well pump.



The same iron pot fragment after conservation treatment.

What were meals like?

Travelling through Connecticut during the Revolutionary War, French officer Marquis de Chastellux observed that "it is a thing unheard of in America to set off without breakfast." The first meal of the day began with coffee or tea and travelers described eating everything from fried chicken, cheese, jam, pickles, and chocolate, to more conventional buttered toast for breakfast. When staying in the town of Fairfield in 1785, young English merchant Robert Hunter, Jr. observed that the "customary breakfast" there was eels, beefsteak and salt-fish. "Johnny cakes" and "Indian slapping," made from a batter of cornmeal, salt, eggs and milk, were fried on a skillet with lard and were New England staples.

Dinner was the big meal of the day and was served in the early afternoon. Meals were comprised of meat or fish with boiled or roasted vegetables, but with little bread. Table condiments were melted butter, salt, pepper and vinegar. Meals were cooked with various garden herbs such as thyme, sweet marjoram, parsley and savory. By the early 18th century a wide variety of spices from around the world were being incorporated into cooking: black pepper, cayenne pepper, cloves, cinnamon, mace, allspice and nutmeg. By the late 18th century even "catsup," derived from a Chinese term for fish sauce, had started to become popular, introduced by the China trade.

The big meal of the day was often accompanied with a mug of cider or beer, or a glass of Madeira, a Portuguese red wine fortified with brandy. Another common drink was "grog," made from rum and water. "Punch" was also a very popular drink in the 18th century and was made from rum, sugar and lemons or

limes; it was passed around and shared from a single bowl.

In the late afternoon families took time out from the fields and shops to have tea together. While crossing through Connecticut with the French Army in 1780 the French Abbé Robin observed that:

... they also use much tea, and this sober infusion constitutes the chief pleasure of their lives; there is not a single person to be found, who does not drink tea out of China cups and saucers, and, upon your entering a house, the greatest mark of civility and welcome they can show you, is to invite you to drink with them.

The first teapots and teacups were quite small, as tea was expensive. Eighteenth-century teacups did not have handles and were held by the rim and footing. Common Chinese teas sold by merchants were Bohea, green, Hyson and Souchong, though mints and herbs from



Part of a slip-decorated earthenware baking dish discovered at the Goodsell Site. Colonial Connecticut families made a wide assortment of fruit, meat and seafood pies.



Part of a complete English white salt-glazed stoneware tea set that was discovered in the cellar of the Sprague House. It had been stored in the pantry and was lost in the fire that consumed the house. On the left is a tea pot (spout and handle missing), a creamer and one of the tea cups and saucers. Note that tea cups at this time did not have handles. The cup was held by the rim and footring.

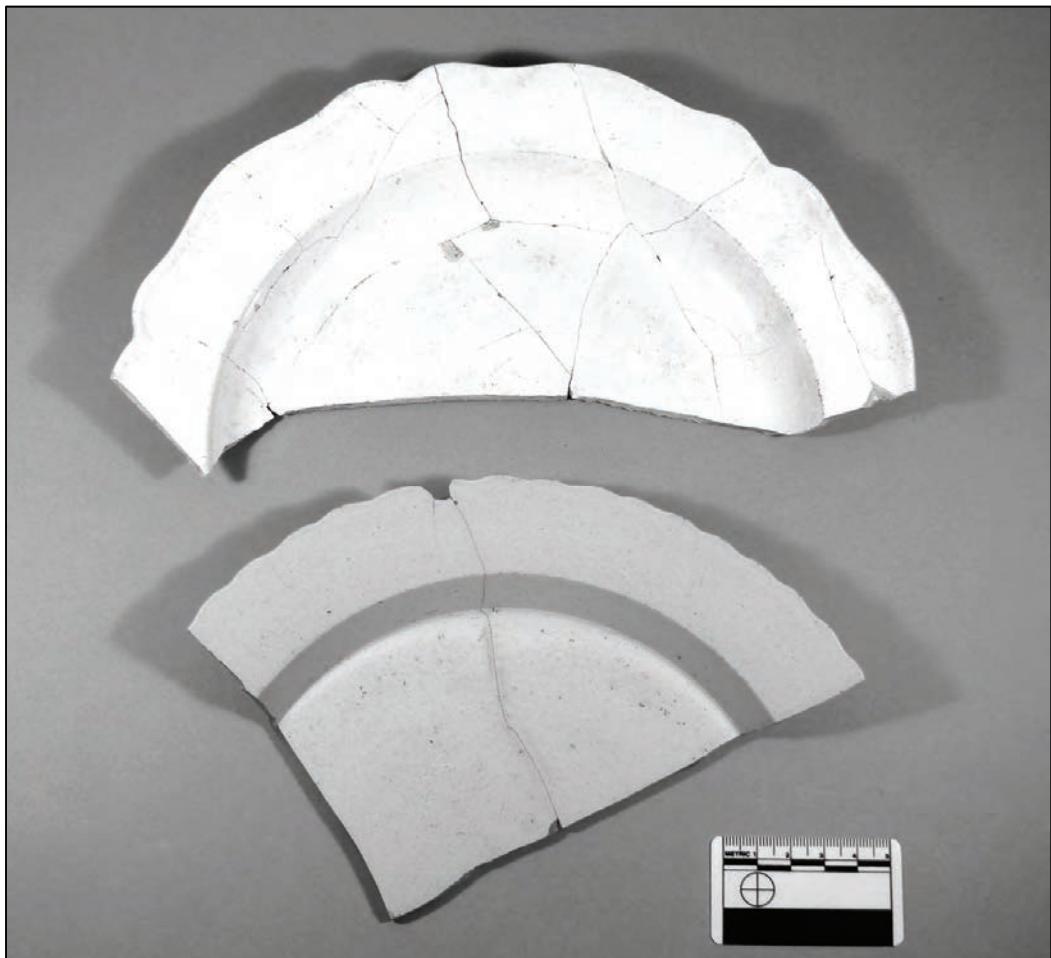
the garden and forest were also brewed. The sherds of various tea-drinking vessels were found at the house sites, including teapots, tea bowls and saucers. A complete ca. 1750 English white stoneware tea set found at the Sprague House also included a scratch-blue-decorated creamer. At the Benedict House a small pewter spoon measuring 4½ inches was found; its diminutive size identifies it as a salt or sugar spoon.

Supper was the last meal of the day and was eaten in the evening. Supper usually involved little preparation and consisted of foods such as cornbread, milk, honey, pudding and boiled eggs.

Connecticut's Blue Laws directed that it was unlawful to travel on Sundays other than to Church and for emergencies and it was also illegal to work or even cook on the Sabbath. Dishes like Indian pudding, baked beans and bean porridge were slow-cooked in the fireplace ashes on Saturday night so they could be eaten the next day.

A pewter salt or sugar spoon from the Benedict Site.





Plates from the Goodsell Site. The top plate is a creamware or "Queen's ware" in the Royal pattern, the one below is an earlier version of English white salt-glazed stoneware.



The excavation of the main fireplace at the Sprague House. The feature was full of animal bone, charcoal, ash and other artifacts.

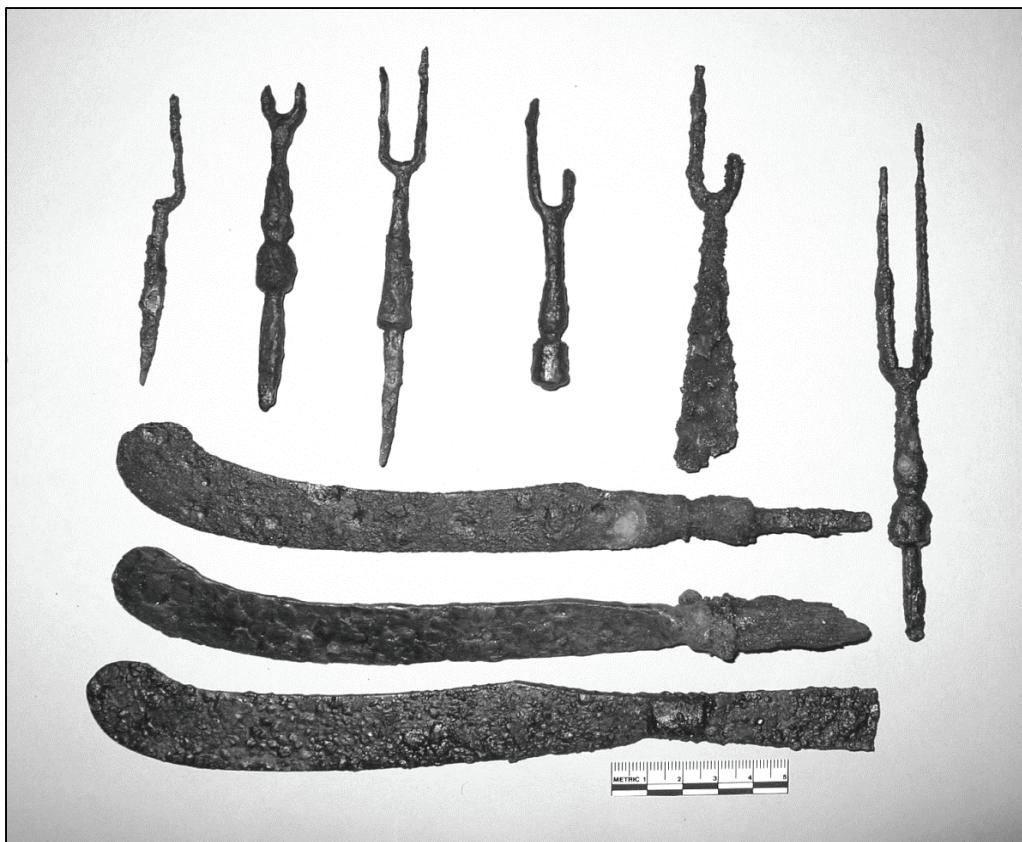


Table forks and knives from the Sprague House. The practice of eating on plates with forks and knives was just becoming common in New England in the mid-18th century.



A pewter spoon handle from the Benedict Site. Interestingly, the handle exhibits symbols often associated with Freemasonry including sun rays at the top, (all-seeing) eyes, and a globe on a column or pillar.

What did families do with their garbage?

It was not until the modern era that household garbage was carried away weekly by sanitation workers to municipal landfills. During the Colonial period families disposed of their daily refuse the same way their medieval ancestors did: by simply tossing it out their doors and windows into the yard. These household dumping areas are called middens by archaeologists and they are rich artifact archives that provide important and detailed information on the everyday lives of people, including what they ate, the dishes they used, what they wore and what kinds of activities they did in the house and yard.

By the mid-18th century ideas of cleanliness were changing and people became more conscious of their trash and its appearance. Families began to carry their refuse a bit away from the house, bury it in large holes in the yard or toss it down ravines out of sight. People also began to learn that household refuse, dirty laundry water and ashes from the fireplace were good fertilizers for gardens and fields.

Every family had a privy or out-house. Little was allowed to go to waste on a Yankee farm and even the contents of privies, called by farmers "night soil," were used for fertilizer. At night people used chamber pots so they wouldn't have to venture out into the dark and cold. When John Taylor died in 1742 he

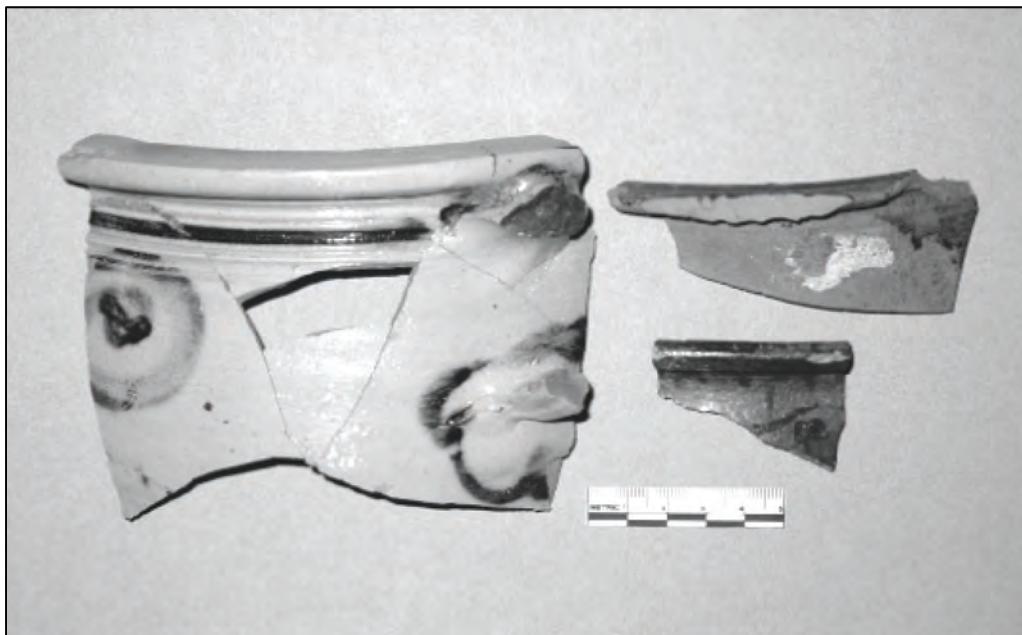


A salt-glazed stoneware chamber pot from the Daniels House. This type of vessel came from what is now Germany and was decorated with blue cobalt paint and applied dragon motifs.

owned one chamber pot valued at 2 shillings, and when Samuel Goodsell died ten years later he had "an old pisspot" valued at six shillings. The best chamber pots were made of stoneware and some of the ones found at the house sites were made in what is now Germany. Such Westerwald pottery was painted with blue cobalt and had applications of medallions and dragons, such as the one found at the Daniels House.



A farmer manuring his field.



Chamber pots from the Sprague Site: German salt-glazed stoneware (left) and lead-glazed red earthenware (center and right).



A cross-mended polychrome decorated punch bowl from the Sprague Site. It was lost during the house fire.



The cellar of the Daniels House after it was excavated. To the left is a bulkhead entrance. No stairs were found, which may have been made of wood and have long rotted away.



The cellar of the Goodsells' "New House" after it was excavated. Only the lower courses of the stone walls remained.

Chapter 6:

Crafts for Home and for Sale

Crafts for Home and for Sale

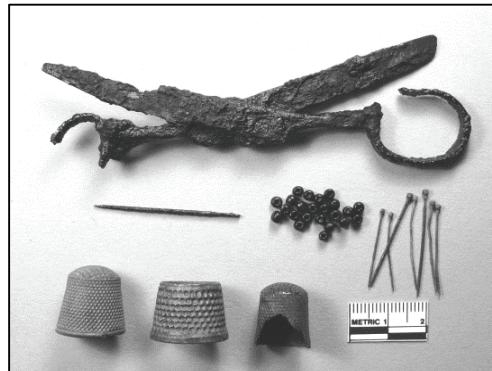
Most Colonial families farmed, and nearly everyone also had special craft skills for making things for the home and for local markets. While marching through Connecticut in 1781, the French army officer Clermont-Crèvecœur commented that:

The people of this province are very hard-working, but they do not labor to excess, as our peasants do. They cultivate only for their physical needs. The sweat of their brow is not expended on satisfying the extravagant desires of the rich and luxury-loving; they limit themselves to enjoying what is truly necessary.



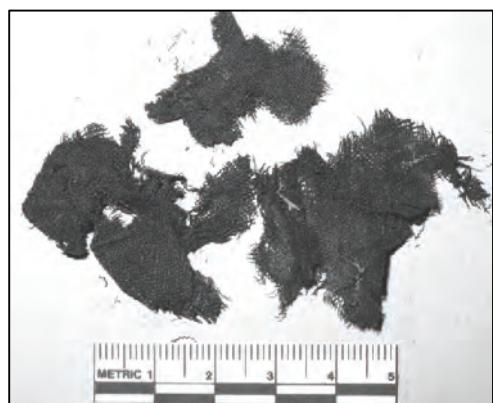
A claw hammer from the Sprague House (top view).

Virtually every man was a carpenter at some level. Thomas Daniels's probate inventory simply listed "carpenter's tools." For Samuel Goodsell's probate, the appraisers recorded each tool individually, which included a hammer, pincers, files, a compass, a handsaw, hatchets, axes, augers, chisel and a gouge. In Ephraim Sprague's probate an ax and drawing knife were listed. The claw hammer and half-round file discovered at the Sprague House are virtually the same forms that are used today. From the Goodsell Site came a pair of pincers, fragments from a sickle or knife blade, a wedge, and long drill bits.



Sewing items from the Daniels House, including scissors, a needle, glass beads, straight pins and thimbles.

In the 18th century cloth was expensive and most families made much of their own clothing. The importance of sewing is reflected in the many hundreds of straight pins that were found. Other sewing artifacts include needles of various sizes, brass thimbles, large tailor shears, small embroidery scissors and a bone cap to a needle case. Some families, like the Spragues and Goodells, were involved in virtually every stage of textile production. They raised sheep for wool and grew the flax for linen; they processed the plant fibers with hatchels and the wool with cards; they spun the

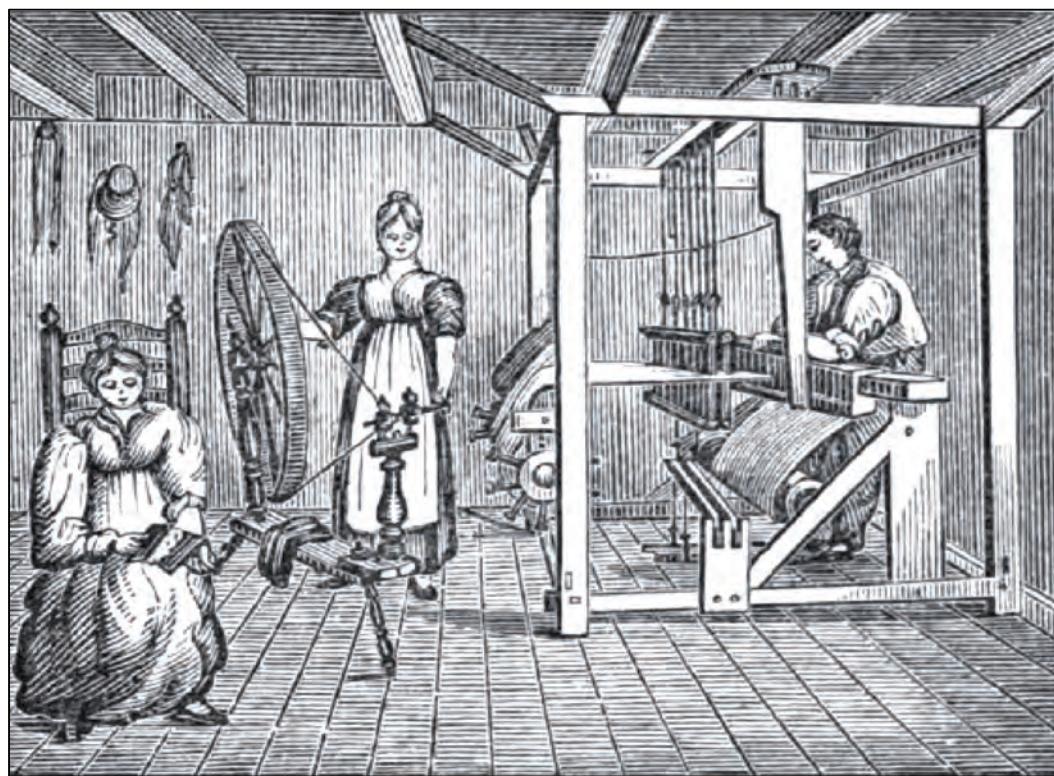


Some charred fragments of "homespun" cloth from the Sprague House. It may have been woven on the family's loom.

fibers into yarn on linen and woolen wheels; and then wove cloth on their own looms. Charred fragments of “homespun” linen and wool cloth were found on the Sprague Site, carbonized by the fire. The Spragues may have woven the wool cloth on the family loom. Samuel Goodsell owned a sizable flock of 16 sheep valued at 30 shillings a head. In his probate were also listed “cards,” which were wire brushes used to disentangle the wool fibers prior to spinning. The Goodsects also had “a Great Wheel,” which was the large spinning wheel used to spin the wool fibers into yarn.

After Hannah Daniels died in 1744, unrecorded tenants moved into the house. The house was expanded to two rooms and an open-face lean-to addition was put on the back. The lean-to housed a small forge that was primarily used to make

nails. Although tedious work, nails could be made in the winter when farm work was less demanding, and they were highly marketable, as houses needed thousands of nails for attaching floorboards, clapboards and shingles. British tariffs on iron goods often made basic hardware hard to get and expensive in the colonies. In 1750 the British Parliament passed the Iron Act in an effort to prevent the production of finished iron goods in America. This limited the colonies to the production of pig iron ingots and bar iron (the basic materials of ironworking) for export to England, which would then manufacture finished goods, such as tools, hardware and kettles out of the iron, and sell them in the Americas at high profits. The Iron Act did much to continue the colonies’ dependency on England for iron products; however,



Various tasks in textile production, including carding the sheared and cleaned wool fibers, spinning the fibers into yarn on a spinning wheel and weaving the yarn into cloth on a loom.

small forges persisted to meet local demands for common and needed iron goods. Artifacts from the Daniels Site forge area include nails of various types: rosehead nails for basic carpentry, L-head and T-head nails (these could be countersunk) for joinery and floor boards, and shoeing nails used to attach horse and oxen shoes. At the Daniels House forge there were concentrations of slag, a waste product of forging, nail-making tools, and hundreds of nails that were rejected or lost about the forge.

Archaeology has the unique ability to reveal aspects of past cultures and past lives that cannot be discovered in any other way. Artifacts are found that had little monetary value and unlikely to be mentioned in a diary or appear in a pro-

bate inventory, but they are personal in nature and can reflect creativity and resourcefulness. Virtually every Colonial house site produced such artifacts and they appear in many forms and materials, indicating that Yankees were practical and frugal. Such frugal and pragmatic values were further integrated into American culture by the writings of Boston-born Benjamin Franklin, who popularized the sayings “A penny saved is two pence clear. A pin a day is a groat a year. Save and have,” “Necessity never made a good bargain,” “He that is rich need not live sparingly, and he that can live sparingly need not be rich,” and “All things are cheap to the saving, dear to the wasteful.”



An 18th-century nailery as depicted in Diderot's Encyclopedia. Although tedious, nail-making could be profitable and could be done during the long winter days when farm work was less demanding.



A small brass saw from the Sprague House that was cut out of a worn-out kettle.

Homemade objects from the Sprague Site include a small handsaw for detail work that was made from brass cut out of a worn-out kettle. There was also evidence of a small improvised brass hasp or hinge, and a patch repair to a brass kettle. Ephraim Sprague was not a blacksmith, but the family took scraps of sheet iron and recycled them into useful everyday objects like a sieve and a funnel. The family also worked an old knife blade into a reinforcing strap and bent an old drill bit into a wall hook. A broken link



A pair of glass inlaid cufflinks from the Benedict Site that were repaired with a bent straight pin.

on a pair of cufflinks was repaired with a bent straight pin. Jackknives were found on every house site and were an important everyday tool for Yankee families.

When a ceramic pot or dish broke, sometimes it was repaired by drilling pairs of matching holes along the break. The pieces were then lashed together with twine or wire and then the holes



A glass bottle fragment from the Goodsell Site. The initials "MG," scratched into the glass, are attributed to the daughter Martha Goodsell.

were plugged with lead. Old dishes of archaic forms continued to be used long after they were considered fashionable. For example, the slipware posset pot discovered on the floor of Lydia



A jackknife found in the Spragues' south cellar. It has a single blade and the outside of the handle is covered with antler.

Goodsell's cellar would have been considered an outdated dish by the time she died around 1797. When window glass broke and needed to be repaired, there were no local glass cutters, so glass panes were carefully chipped into shape by homeowners and then refitted into the windows. To keep track of one's glass bottles, sometimes the owner's initials were scratched into it. A glass bottle fragment from the Goodsell Site has the initials "MG" scratched into it, which are attributed to daughter Martha Goodsell. When tobacco pipe stems broke, the thick stem was often chipped or ground down to form a nib to fit comfortably in the mouth.

On the floor of the north cellar of the Sprague House a small cache of deer antlers was found. Some of the antlers had been sawn and worked to make other objects. Because antler is both workable and strong, it was used to make a variety of objects such as knife handles and gunpowder measures. Deer were also highly valued for their hides and venison. Although there was no game conservation as there is now, some towns attempted to control deer-hunting by appointing a "deer-reeve" to regulate how many animals were taken each year. In 1698 the Connecticut General Court passed laws to protect deer populations, but within a hundred years the animals had become virtually extinct in the state. In 1975 Connecticut held its first white-tailed deer hunting season and today deer is a valuable game animal.

A Changing Economy in the Land of Steady Habits

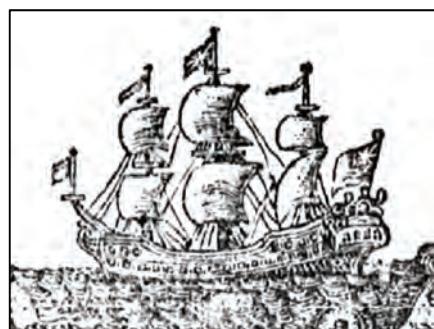
By the mid-18th century the Connecticut Colony had become an active participant in the global economy, especially with the West Indies trade. Connecticut exported salted beef and pork, cheese, beef cattle, horses, lumber, grains, and

other commodities in return for molasses, sugar, salt, chocolate, rum, and spices like allspice, vanilla and ginger. With their surplus crafts and produce, Connecticut families purchased tablewares from England's burgeoning ceramic industry. The first mass-produced matching dishes became widely available, including white salt-glazed stoneware by the 1750s and creamware, or Queen's ware, in the 1770s. Some families had a few carefully chosen dishes of blue-painted Chinese



A cache of deer antlers was found on the floor of the Sprague House north cellar. The tines or "points" of this antler had been sawed off to make objects such as knife handles.

porcelain, which was the most expensive. Families were now eating at the table together with their own individual place setting. Matching plates and cups, table forks and knives, and clear glassware with etched or enameled decorations became commonplace, and families were now drinking Chinese tea sweetened with West Indies sugar which they drank from



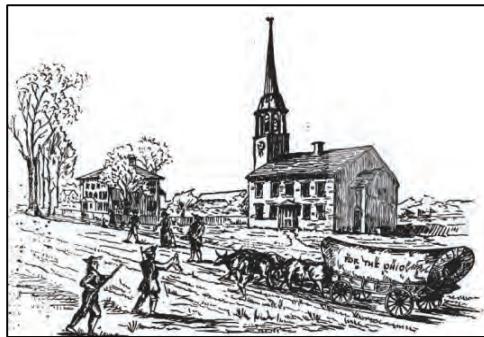
A 1758 advertisement for a ship setting sail for St. Kitts Island in the West Indies.

matching tea sets imported from England. Within a single generation, the material culture of Connecticut Yankee households had been transformed from that of their post-Medieval ancestors to something much more familiar to us today.

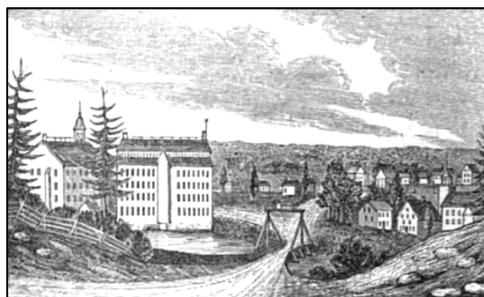
This period also marked the beginning of great technological innovation in Connecticut. Colonial historian Carl Bridenbaugh wrote

That spirit of inventiveness which seems so outstanding among our national characteristics had its beginnings not after the Revolution, as is so often stated, but in the late colonial period. Significantly the phenomenon developed even more in the rural villages than in the larger towns.

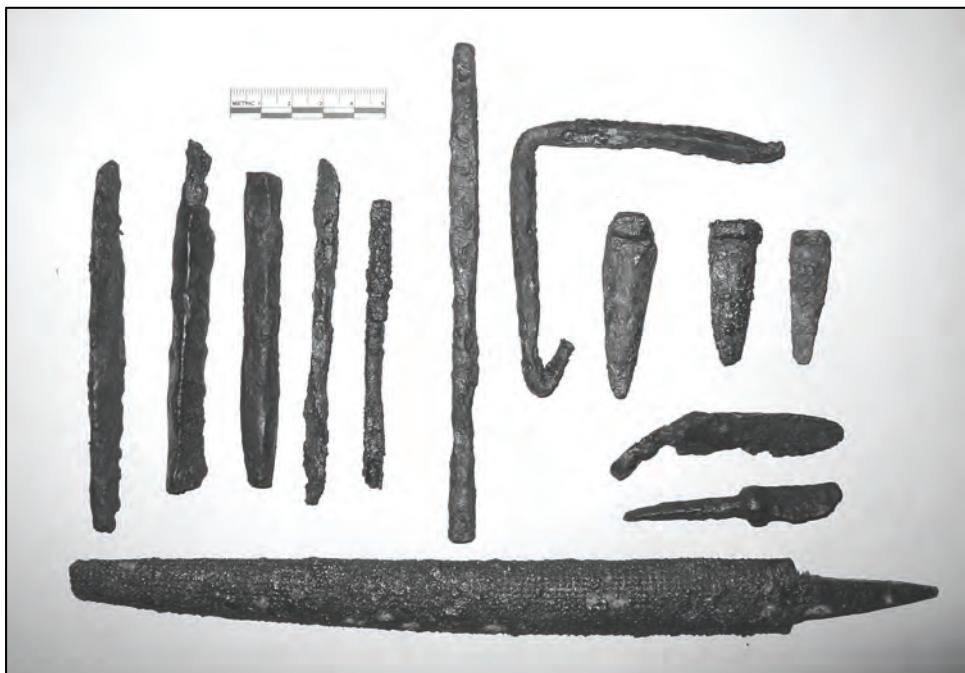
This “Yankee Ingenuity” first appeared, he noted, in Eastern Connecticut. Connecticut Yankees would forever shape the country and the world from their homes and shops with innovations in agriculture, iron-smelting, arms manufacturing, clock-making, and printing. After the Revolutionary War, many Yankees brought their inventiveness, frugality, education and resourcefulness to the American frontiers of Vermont, New York, Ohio and beyond to explore and settle. Connecticut Yankees sailed to the Far East to trade and reached the far corners of the world to whale and fish. Others would stay in Connecticut and farm and work in mills and factories.



A family leaving Connecticut to settle in Ohio in the late 1780s.



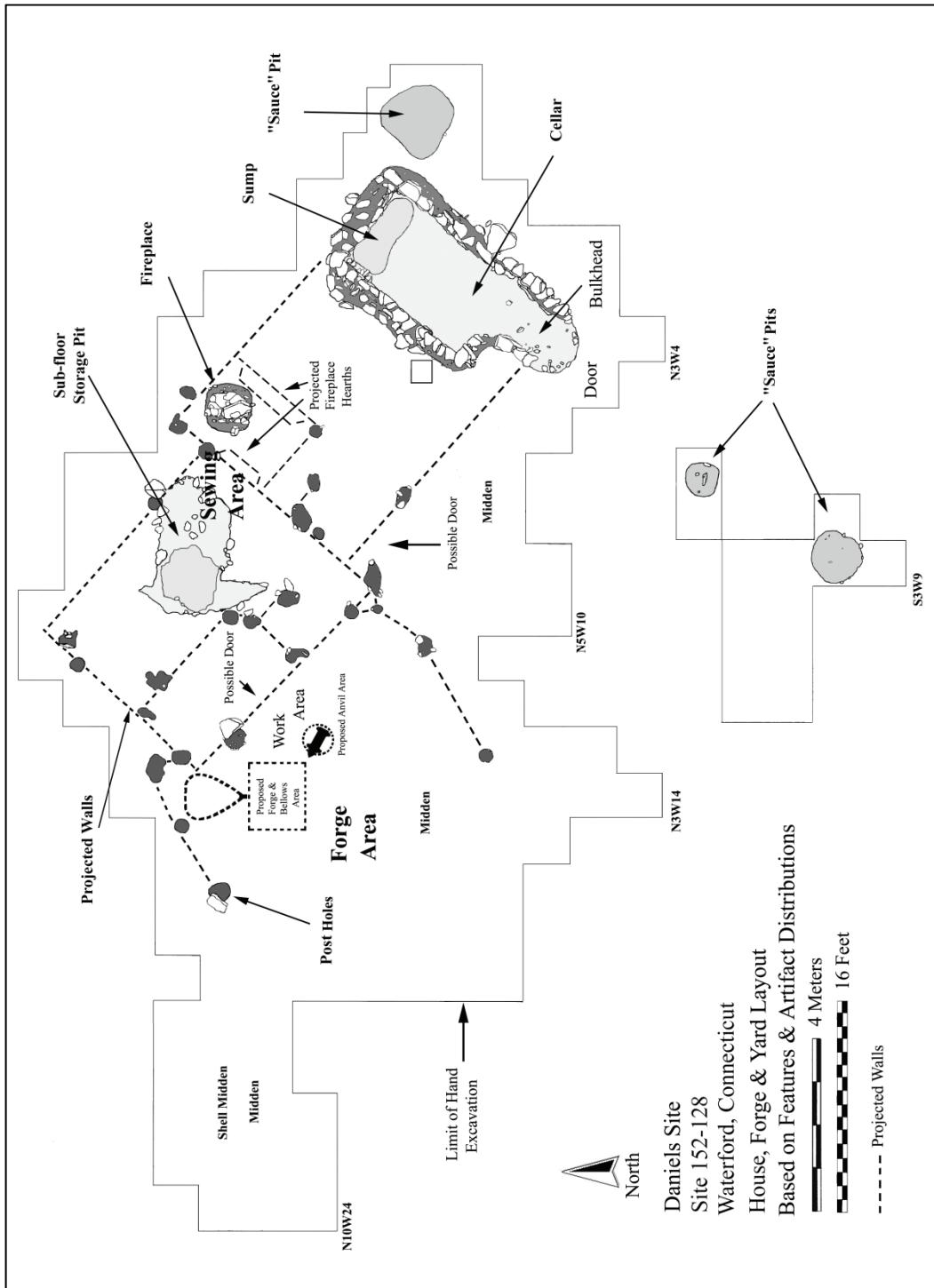
The mill village of Willimantic in the 1830s. The white buildings to the left are cotton and woolen mills. By this time “homespun” textile production was being phased out.



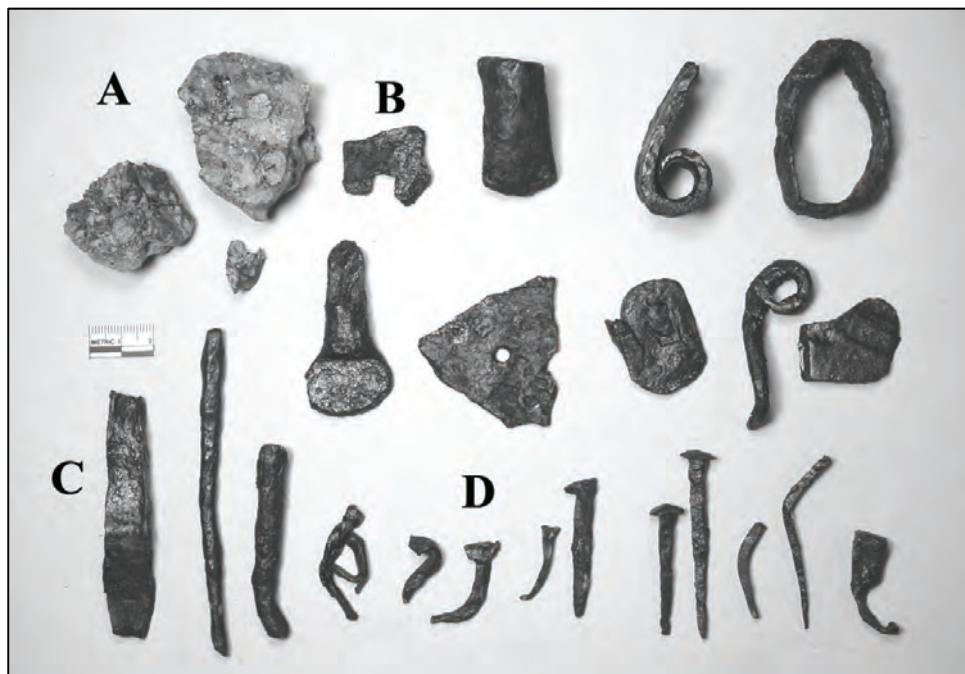
Tools from the Sprague House including (from left to right) two triangular file fragments, a punch, four drill bits (one is bent into a hook), three wedges, two small knives and, on the bottom, a half-round file.



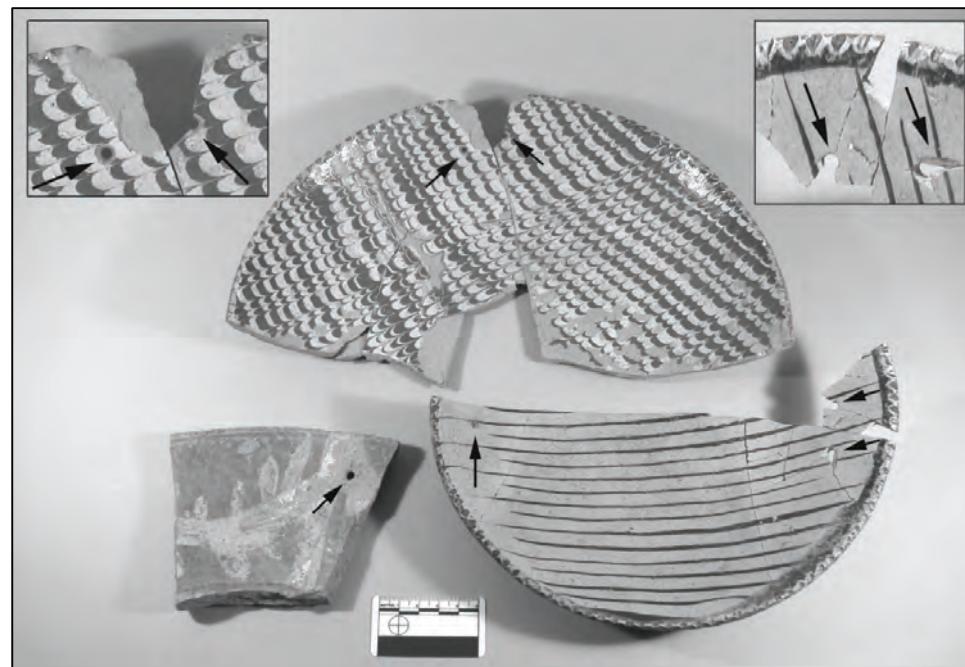
Tools from the Goodsell Site (from top to bottom) a broken wedge, a knife blade, pincers, two drill bits.



Archaeological site plan of the Daniels House, showing location of forge area and post molds.



Artifacts from the Daniel's House forge and nailery, including A) slag (forging waste products), B) a header fragment (a tool used to shape nails), C) nail rods (the nail preforms) and D) various types of nails made including T-head, L-head, rosehead and headless. The rest is scrap iron.



Repaired dished from the Goodsell Site. Pairs of holes (arrows) were drilled along the break and the pieces were lashed together with wire or twine. The holes were sometimes plugged with lead.

Chapter 7:

Conclusion

Conclusion

The archaeological and historical investigations at the four house sites excavated as part of CTDOT road-improvement projects enriched and expanded the understanding of Colonial Connecticut lifeways. Each site tells a unique story, but they all are variations on a theme – how average people lived in 18th-century Connecticut – and they are more alike than they are different. They are all Yankees.

The 1712 - ca.1770s Daniels House site in Waterford was the home of a farmer who had a bit of good fortune by purchasing land from his father-in-law. It was mostly a rocky, wet piece of property, so that even his modest house required a sump in the cellar, but it had the advantage of being in immediate proximity to the port of New London. Daniels therefore had access to merchant ships and probably participated in West Indies trade with the extra beef and cattle he owned. Daniels became a successful, self-sufficient farmer by playing well the hand he held; he raised cattle because his land limited his other options, and he participated in a global economy through coastal trade. He was the quintessential Yankee: making the most out of what he had through hard work and ingenuity. His house was simple, and even a forge lean-to added after his death was built simply with post-in-ground technique, which has not been documented for this period elsewhere in Connecticut.

The ca. 1713-1806 Benedict House in Wilton was occupied by four different families, all of whom were solid middling-sort farmers. The Benedict House families did not live near an international port, but they were connected to a global economy through their purchase of English-made goods and membership in a Freemason organization active in Ameri-

ca and Europe. One owner had a distinguished career in the Revolutionary War.

In North Branford, two small houses sat close together on the Goodsell property: the original “old” house built ca. 1725 and occupied to ca. 1775, and the “new” house, ca. 1750 - ca. 1797. Samuel Goodsell acquired land as a result of his father’s proprietor’s rights, but he worked hard to make something of himself, with a farm, orchard, cider mill and an interest in a sawmill. Goodsell’s house, the “old” house, was likely a simple one-room end-chimney type built on foundation stones laid directly on the ground. No houses of this form survive today. A second, similar house, the “new” house, was built ca. 1750, just before Goodsell’s untimely death in a sawmill accident. This house was small and simple, like the “old” house. Goodsell’s widow and never-married daughter Martha occupied the “new” house until ca. 1797, carrying on with the farming and cider-making, perhaps with help living in the old house. The Goodsells lived seven miles from Long Island Sound, and they collected shellfish and ballast cobbles for flint-making from the shore. They too, then, were participants in a larger economy, and also maximized every means at their disposal to make a living.

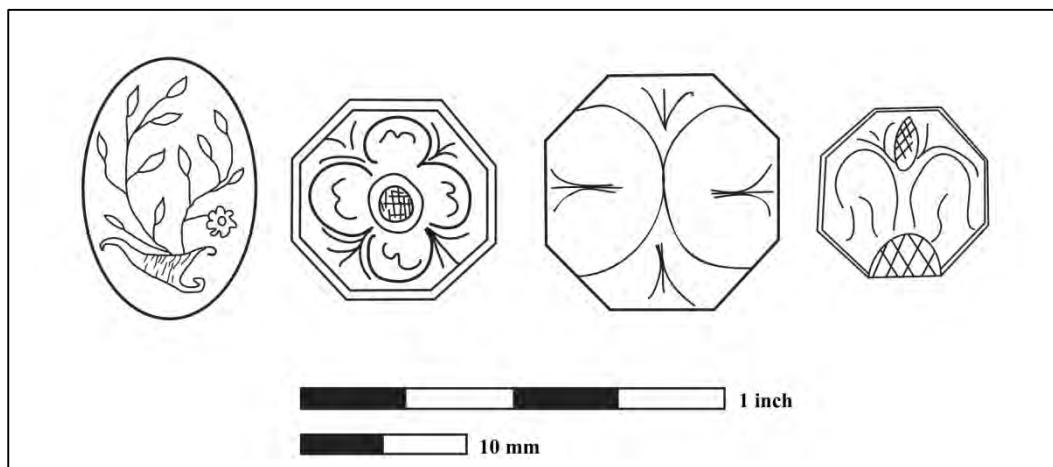
The ca. 1705 - 1750s Sprague House in Andover was destroyed in a fire, thus it contained the most abundant archaeological evidence; this is because burned and broken artifacts are abandoned, and fire and ash preserve organic materials. Ephraim Sprague moved to Connecticut from Duxbury, near Plymouth, Massachusetts, to which his great-grandfather had immigrated in the 17th century from England. Sprague built a West Country-style cross-passage house in what was

then Connecticut's interior frontier, even though he almost certainly never visited England. West Country-style houses were known in the Plymouth area, although none are standing. This kind of conservatism is another hallmark of Yankee character. Sprague began modestly and never became wealthy, but he achieved a social prominence the other families did not: he was a deacon, militia leader, and delegate to the Connecticut General Court, in addition to his role as a farmer and weaver. Sprague lived frugally, with his only real extravagance an English tea set, a fragile item he probably bought in Norwich, off a trade ship, in the vanguard of the European, and American, social custom of tea drinking. The tea set speaks volumes about Sprague's drive to be *au courant* but not ostentatious.

All of the sites provided abundant evidence of the classic Yankee character: hard work by all family members; maximizing available assets such as location; practicing trades or crafts in addition to farming; relying not only on home-raised food but hunting, fishing and shellfish-gathering; production and repair of homemade tools, cloth and food; and

home construction that was practical and economical. Each family had a few fine items, but not many, not only because such things were expensive but because it was not in the Colonial Yankee character to engage in conspicuous consumption. Even Connecticut's early governors are described by surprised outsiders as living in modest homes and wearing old-fashioned clothing. Hard work, modesty and conservatism in daily life were valued, as was the family unit working together for home-based self-sufficiency. These 18th-century farmer-centric values began to erode as factories and mechanization appeared, luring people off of farms and erasing the need for home-made cloth and other items as mass production made them affordable. A way of life, anchored to land and family, disappeared without any systematic recordation, because people were too busy living and adapting to write books about it.

It is the job of historians and archaeologists, working in tandem, to find the remnants of the long-gone Yankee past and piece them together to reconstruct how people lived in Connecticut in this simpler time. Reconstructing these



Cufflinks or sleeve buttons from the Sprague House Site (as drawn by Heather Alexson to highlight the decorative details).

stories takes both documentary and archaeological evidence: one without the other is incomplete and inaccurate because it is equivalent to figuring out a puzzle with a lot of pieces missing. Transportation archaeology provides important opportunities to find these lost sites and from them to reconstruct the past, which benefits us all. Highway improvements cause change that people often find frustrating, but they also provide valuable opportunities for learning about the past.

For every CTDOT project that uncovers and preserves our past, other projects are destroying it. The vast majority of construction in Connecticut does not require archeological study. If neither state nor federal funding is involved, private and municipal developers are typically under no obligation to identify archaeological sites. Every year, dozens or even hundreds of archaeological sites that are destroyed by municipal and private construction projects. Every site lost is a piece of our collective past gone forever. A few Connecticut towns have made pre-development archaeological surveys mandatory, but only the public can encourage towns to make discovery and understanding our past, in concert with development, a priority. That would be revolutionary.

**Suggestions
for
Further Reading**

Suggestions for Further Reading

Connecticut and New England Colonial History

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Feder, Kenneth L. *A Village of Outcasts: Historical Archaeology and Documentary Research at the Lighthouse Site*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing, 1993.

Noël Hume, Ivor. *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1991.

Web Sites

Ephraim Sprague House Archaeological Site
<http://www.ahs-inc.biz/Sprague/>

Thomas Daniels Archaeological Site
<http://www.ahs-inc.biz/Daniels/>

Waste Not, Want Not: The Colonial Era Midden
<http://connecticuthistory.org/waste-not-want-not-the-colonial-era-midden/>

The technical reports for the archaeological investigations are archived in the Connecticut Historic Preservation Collection, Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Glossary

GLOSSARY

Baked beans This iconic Yankee dish was typically prepared with beans, onions, salt pork, mustard and molasses in a pot that was slowly cooked in fireplace coals and ash overnight.

Banking a cellar To keep perishable foods stored in cellars from freezing, a variety of materials such as dried leaves, straw, and seaweed were mounded up against the outside of the house foundation walls for insulation.

Bean porridge To make this Colonial dish beans were simmered in beef broth until thick. Small bits of cooked beef were often added. An old Yankee rhyme went “Beans porridge hot, bean porridge cold, bean porridge in the pot nine days old.”

Blue Laws First established in New Haven in 1655, these laws were based on Puritan doctrines to enforce religious standards and personal conduct, especially on Sundays. Some Blue Laws included no traveling, cooking or working on the Sabbath.

Breakback house An old Connecticut term for a saltbox house (see Saltbox, below).

Candlewood Wood splints made from various resinous woods, such as pine, that were burned for light.

Cartridge box A shoulder pouch used by soldiers to hold paper cartridges for muskets. Each cartridge contained a load of pre-measured gunpowder and a lead ball and/or shot.

Casement window Windows that swung out to open. The hinges were usually iron pintles and the frame was made of forged iron. The window glass panes or “quarrels,” were held in place by strips of H-shaped “came” or “leads.”

Cross-passage house A long and narrow type of house characterized by three main rooms, a large fireplace, and a cross-passage running perpendicular through the house. This house form was brought to the colonies from England, but no standing examples in America have survived.

Deer-reeve An elected town official who regulated the killing of deer. Deer were highly valued for their leather, meat and antlers.

Earthfast or post-in-ground construction A construction technique that involved placing a series of upright posts along the building wall perimeter. Sometimes the clapboards were nailed directly to the outside of the posts which had been planed flat or made “puncheon.” This type of construction was economical but the posts rotted away eventually.

Feature An archaeological artifact that is too large to move. Examples of features on house sites include buried wells, privy holes, walkways, and food storage pits.

Flip A common Colonial drink typically made from rum, sugar, eggs and ale that was whipped up in a mug and then heated with a red-hot iron called a “loggerhead.”

Gammon A pork leg that was brined and then smoked to preserve it. Essentially, what we now call ham.

Garret The uppermost floor or attic of a colonial house. Garrets were primarily used for storage and sleeping.

Gunflint A piece of flint that was fitted to the hammer of a flintlock gun lock used to ignite a gunpowder charge when fired.

Hall-and-parlor house An ancient house form brought to the colonies from England that included a central fireplace that was flanked on each side by rooms called a hall and a parlor.

Hessian fly A species of insect believed to have been brought by Hessian mercenaries during the Revolutionary War and that caused a wheat blight in the colonies.

Hog-reeve An elected town official who regulated swine and appraised damages they caused to crops.

Homespun A term applied to cloth woven in a household on a loom. The term was also applied to clothing. It was later applied to mean anything simply or crudely made.

Indian pudding A type of pudding made by cooking dried and ground or pounded cornmeal in water or milk. It was usually sweetened with molasses or maple syrup. In the Colonial period the term “corn” meant all types of grains and “Indian corn” referred specifically to what we now call maize or just “corn.”

Iron hollowwares A Colonial term used that referred to all sorts of iron pots and kettles.

Lean-to or “linter” An addition put across the back of a Colonial house.

Lug Pole A freshly cut and stout pole suspended between two ledges up in the chimney from which were hung trammels, kettle hooks and chains used to suspended cooking pots.

Midden A term archaeologists use to define an area with a concentration of household refuse.

Night soil The waste contents of a privy or outhouse hole used to fertilize or manure agricultural fields. The men hired to perform this task often worked at night. When dried and sold commercially night soil was called “poudrette.”

One-room end-chimney house An old house form that consisted of one main room, a hall, with a fireplace placed at one end of the house. This house type was usually one and a half to two stories and was sometimes expanded with a parlor to make a hall and parlor house.

Posset A popular colonial drink made with curdled milk, eggs, sugar, ale or wine and spices. A precursor to eggnog.

Potash Potassium carbonate produced by slowly percolating water through wood ashes. This was usually done in a barrel or tub, called an ash hopper, with a filter made of straw. Potash was used in making soap, glass production and in medicines.

Privy Also called an outhouse or necessary house, it was a small building set apart from the house and used as a toilet.

Puncheons A large support post used in construction that was planed flat on one side. Puncheon posts were used in one type of post-in-ground or earthfast construction.

Quarrel An old term for a pane of window glass. Eighteenth-century window glass was square, diamond and triangular in shape and was green or blue-green in color.

Saltbox A type of house that consisted of a hall and parlor with a center chimney and a lean-to off the back. Also called a breakback in Connecticut.

Sauce or “sass” and sauce pits In 18th-century New England various root vegetables were often referred to as “sauce.” One method of storing them in the winter included burying them in a hole lined with straw or boards. Such “sauce” pits were typically two to three feet in diameter and two to three feet deep. The top was mounded over with dirt, manure or seaweed for insulation.

Scotch-Irish Beginning in 1718 and through the 1720s, groups of Presbyterian colonists came to New England from the Ulster region of Northern Ireland. Most settled on the frontier and introduced the potato and an innovative foot-powered linen spinning wheel.

Spider An iron skillet with a long handle and long feet.

Steel or fire steel A hand-held tool used to make fires by striking it against a sharp piece of flint called a strike-a-light. The sparks created were directed onto a prepared piece of charred cloth or twisted tow and then blown into flames with tinder.

Tow A bundle of coarse and broken fibers made from flax or hemp.

Trammel An adjustable fireplace hook used to suspend pots and kettles in a fireplace hearth when cooking.

Trencher A wooden plate used for eating. Although they were used in medieval Europe, they were still used in America in the 18th century until pewter and then ceramic plates became available.

Wampum Small tubular beads made from whelk (white) and quahog (purple) shells. Wampum figured importantly in Native American beliefs and rituals, but was also used in the early colonial period as a medium of exchange or currency.

Window came or lead These were H-shaped lead fasteners used to hold early window glass or quarrels in place. They were mostly associated with early casement windows, but were still found on Connecticut houses in the late 18th century.

Appendix:

Selected Probate Inventories

Selected Probate Inventories

In studying the families of Colonial Connecticut, probate inventories can provide a valuable snapshot of a person's life. Whenever a person with a fair amount of property died, the local probate court would appoint two or three reliable men to make a list of the deceased's possessions, typically including land, livestock, bedding, furniture, and debts, and to assign a value to each item. The resulting list, called an appraisal or inventory, was used to determine if the estate was solvent, that is, assets and money owed to the deceased exceeded the amount owed to others, and to help guide the distribution of property among the heirs.

Probate inventories have their limitations as an historical source. People with very little property, including most women, rarely had their estates probated. The appraisers had a threshold for itemizing possessions: small items such as pins, tobacco pipes, and chickens rarely appear in the lists. Finally, by definition probate inventories indicate a person's

material wealth only at the time of death. Many possessions, including land, may have already been distributed to the next generation, and if a person had become sick or otherwise dependent, the probate inventory might represent only a shadow of what they owned in the prime of life.

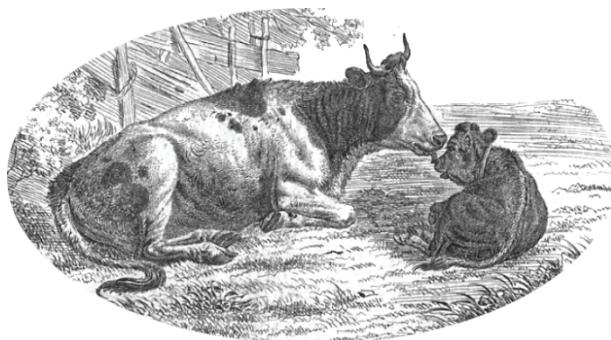
Nevertheless, it is the rare probate inventory that fails to offer intriguing information about a person's day to day life. The following inventories are presented in the belief that the details therein go hand in hand with the archaeological data in illuminating the lives of these four families.

For readability, capitalization and spelling have been modernized, and explanatory text has been added in brackets as needed. Currency is British pounds, shillings, pence, and, in one case, farthings. The original documents are in the Connecticut State Library; contemporary copies were recorded in the bound-volume records of the probate courts.

Estate of Thomas Daniels, 1735 Town of New London, New London Probate District

	£	s	d
ten sheep and eight lambs	7	0	0
one mare and colt	5	10	0
one cow and calf	5	10	0
one three year old heifer	3	0	0
two cows and two calves	14	0	0
three swine	2	8	0
the lock of the pound	0	2	0
two broad hoes	0	15	0
one stubbing hoe	0	2	0
old iron	0	1	6
part of one iron chain	0	8	0
one pair of plow irons	1	0	0
grinding stone	0	10	0

one saddle and bridle	3	12	6
one gun	1	0	0
old pewter	2	6	0
new pewter	2	15	0
seven pewter spoons	0	4	0
one pair of old steelyard	0	5	0
one frying pan	0	13	0
one old iron kettle	0	10	0
one pot and hooks	0	7	0
one iron trammel	0	10	0
one water pail	0	2	0
wooden dishes	0	2	6
earthenware	0	2	0
five chairs	1	0	0
one meal bag	0	5	0
one pair of wool cards	0	5	0
one woolen wheel	0	2	0
one linen wheel	0	8	0
one cow hide	0	13	4
one old chest	0	4	0
five old casks	0	5	0
one bed and furniture	6	2	0
carpenters tools	2	13	6
one yoke of oxen	18	0	0
one yoke of oxen	16	0	0
one yoke of oxen	10	0	0
one iron chain	0	18	0
one iron chain	0	16	0
a cart and wheels hoops and boxes	2	18	0
houses and lands fences and orchard	4	0	0
 Total	511	11	10



Estate of Hannah Daniels, 1742
Town of New London, New London Probate District

	<i>£</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>
wearing apparel	6	18	0
bed & bedding	13	0	0
a kettle & 2 pewter platters	13	0	0
earthenware an old piggin	0	4	0
a woolen wheel	0	8	0
a cow and calf	13	10	0
a linen wheel	0	13	0
a frying pan	0	15	0
a old chest	0	8	0
own hog	1	5	0
two geese & 9 goslings	1	0	0
a old bedstead	0	8	0
a trammel	0	9	0
earthenware & a bowl	0	1	0
two pewter platters	1	6	0
washing tub	0	1	6
a kettle	0	10	0
 Total	 42	 4	 6



Estate of John Taylor, 1742
Town of Norwalk, Norwalk Probate District

	<i>£</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>
house and homestead	280	0	0
1 yoke oxen	28	0	0
1 bay horse coming three years old	18	0	0
1 yellow cow	10	0	0
1 red cow	10	0	0
1 brindle cow	10	0	0
1 yearling heifer	4	0	0
2 calves	4	0	0
18 sheep at 17s per sheep	15	6	0
5 acres of land lying easterly of Mr. St. John's land	17	10	0
8 acres of land lying more east still	24	0	0
14 acres of land lying near the meeting house	20	0	0
a small piece of land lying near Capt. Brook	10	0	0
2 large swine at £6, 2 lesser at £4, one sow £3 10s	13	10	0
4 store shoats at £1 15s apiece	7	0	0
1 old bedstead, cord & mat 10s, a small feather bed and 2 pillows £5 15s, 1 bolster 10s, 3 blankets £2	8	5	0
1 old feather bed £4 10s, bedstead, cord & under bed 15s, 2 pillows and bolster £1 10s & 1 new coverlet £1	8	15	0
1 bolster and 2 pillows	1	4	0
2 blankets at £1 10s apiece, 2 coverlets at 15s apiece	4	10	0
1 old bedstead, cord & under bed and a ticking	1	0	0
1 old blanket, old ticking, old sheet	0	10	0
2 sheets half worn at £1 5s, 2 sheets at 15s	2	0	0
2 old sheets	0	8	0
2 old sheets at 12s, 3 new sheets at £3 10s	4	2	0
1 sheet 12s 6d, 1 old ditto 6s	0	1	6
4 new pillow bears [cases] 15s, 3 old ditto 5s	1	0	0
5 napkins 10s, 1 table cloth 7s	0	7	0
6 ½ yards of linen and tow cloth at 10s pr. yd.	3	5	0
29 pounds of sheep's wool at 4s 6d pr. Pound	6	10	6
an old cart and cart irons £2 15s, horse gear & harness £1 10s	4	5	0
1 old plowshare 9s 9d, caster 10s 9d, bolt and collar 5s	1	5	6
1 iron chain £1 4s, 1 whipple tree chain 7s	1	11	0
1 old narrow ax 5s, 1 old ditto 5s, small froe 4s	0	14	0
1 nail hammer 3s, old curb bridle bits 12s	0	15	0
2 pair of small shears	0	3	0
box iron and heaters	0	7	0
fire slice and tongs £1, 1 trammel £1	2	0	0
tow yarn £2 9s 6d, 13 pounds of linen yarn £3 11s 6d	6	1	0
1 warming pan 15s, 1 great spinning wheel 6s	1	1	0
1 reel 9s, a small quantity of tow yarn 4s 6d	0	13	6
1 churn 14s, 4 chairs 12s 1 table 5s	1	11	0

1 chest 12s, 1 ditto 10s, 1 old box 3s	1	5	0
1 brass kettle £5 10s, 1 iron pot 12s, a small ditto 4s	6	6	0
1 iron kettle £1 7s, 1 white wood bowl 2s	1	9	0
3 knot dishes 11s, 1 small dish 1s, 1 wooden bowl 1s	0	13	0
1 stone jug 4s, 1 earthen jug 2s, 1 small ditto 1s	0	7	0
1 earthen milk pan 2s, 1 earthen creamer 2s, chamber pot 2s	0	6	0
1 earthen platter 1s 1d, 1 earthen mug 1s, 1 earthen porringer 9d	0	3	0
1 earthen pitcher 1s, 1 small earthen platter 9d	0	1	9
7 trenchers 2s, 3 pails 5s, 1 glass bottle 1s	0	8	0
1 large pewter platter 16s, 1 old ditto 10s, two middling ditto £1 8s	2	14	0
7 spoons 5s 3d, 1 two-quart basin 12s, 2 quart basins 10s	1	7	3
2 pewter porringers 4s, 1 pewter meaker [?] 1s 6d	0	5	6
1 quart pot 10s, 1 pewter plate 1s 6d	0	11	6
2 meat barrels gear cask & tubs & old casks in the cellar	1	3	6
1 old hogshead 4s, 1 leader tub 5s	0	9	0
1 old half bushel 1s 6d, 1 old pitchfork 2s, 4 small books 12s	0	15	6
3 knives 4 forks 8s, 1 meat barrel 5s, 1 candlestick 1s 6d	0	14	6
1 pair of cards 12s, 1 saddle £3, a pair of bridle bitts 3s	3	15	0
1 cow bell & strap 3s, old hoe 2s 6d, 2 sickles 8s, scythe tackling 4s	0	17	6
beetle rings & 2 wedges	0	17	6
65 bushels of corn at 8s pr. bushel	26	0	0
14 bushels of wheat at 14s pr. bushel	9	6	0
34 bushels of maslin at 12s pr. bushel	20	8	0
16 bushels of oats at 5s pr. bushel	4	0	0
1 castor hat £1 15s, 2 linen shirts £1 10s, 2 pairs of tow britches 5s	4	0	0
1 old felt hat 3s, 1 pair of shoes 6s, 2 woolen shirts £1	1	9	0
1 old silk handkerchief 3s, 2 pair of stockings 14s	0	17	0
1 pr. leather britches 12s, 1 loose coat £2 10s	3	2	0
1 straight-bodied coat £4, 1 old waistcoat 8s, an old coat 15s	5	3	0
1 old pair of woolen britches	0	6	0
1 hetchel £1 10s, 3 bags 15s, 1 jackknife 1s 6d	2	6	6
2 acres of land at Danbury	4	0	0



Estate of Samuel Goodsell, 1752
Town of Branford, Guilford Probate District

	<i>£ s d</i>
a large iron kettle	8 0 0
a large porridge pot	3 12 6
1 iron kettle weighed 15 pounds	1 17 6
a lesser ditto that weighed 11 1/2 pounds	1 8 0
a porridge pot weighed 23 pounds	2 17 6
a great iron skillet 6 3/4 pounds	0 17 0
a lesser ditto 9s a frying pan 18s	1 7 0
a chain that weighed 17 pounds	4 5 0
a boars [prob. boss, a small cask] 40s best frying pan 20s	3 0 0
an ax 10s three pounds of old iron	0 14 6
a fire peel that weighed 5 pounds	1 5 0
a trammel that weighed 5 1/2	1 7 6
a pair of tongs that weighed 3 pounds	0 15 0
a trammel that weighed 5 pounds	1 5 0
a gridiron 15s a flesh fork 5s	1 0 0
a boxiron and 2 heaters 1£ 5s 2 poorer ditto	1 11 0
a looking glass 3£ a pitcher 5s 3 brooms 18s	4 3 0
2 small brooms 10s a small ditto 4s	0 14 0
a bed [i.e., mattress] that weighed 53 pounds	21 0 0
2 bolsters and 3 pillows weighed 25 pounds	10 0 0
a bedstead bed mat & cord	2 5 0
3 bed blankets 4£ 6s a old birdseye coverlet	6 16 0
a new birdseye checkered coverlet	4 10 0
another coverlet 3£ a bed quilt 4£	7 0 0
a bed with streaked ticking that weighed 53 1/2	21 8 0
4 pillows weighed 11 pounds	4 8 0
1 old birdseye coverlet	1 10 0
2 dittos 4£ a set of curtains & valences 7£	8 0 0
a bed that weighed 43 1/2 pounds	18 7 0
a birdseye coverlet another ditto	5 0 0
a rag coverlet 1£ a trundle bedstead & cord 2£	3 0 0
a bed that weighed 46 1/2 pounds	24 15 0
a bolster and two pillows weighed 17 pounds	9 7 0
a checkered birdseye coverlet	4 10 0
another ditto 4£ 10s a bedstead cord & mat 1£ 10s	6 0 0
a bed supposed to weigh 65 pounds	16 5 0
a bolster and pillow weighed 14 pounds 3	0 10 0
a bedstead cord & mat	1 10 0
a coverlet 4£ 15s another ditto 2£ 10s	7 5 0
a bedstead & cord 1£ 5s a new bed mat 1£ 5s	2 10 0
a new sheet 2£ 10s a pair of dittos 2£ 10s	5 0 0
2 pair of sheets 2£ 5s a pair	4 10 0
a pair of dittos 1£ 10s one old ditto 1£ 5s	2 15 0

a pair of narrow dittos	0 13 0
2 old table cloths 13s one old ditto 6s	0 19 0
a twilled table cloth 12s 2 lace pillow coats 6s	1 8 0
4 towels 18s three pillow coats 14s	1 12 0

The linen that belonged to the first woman [Mary Hotchkiss]:

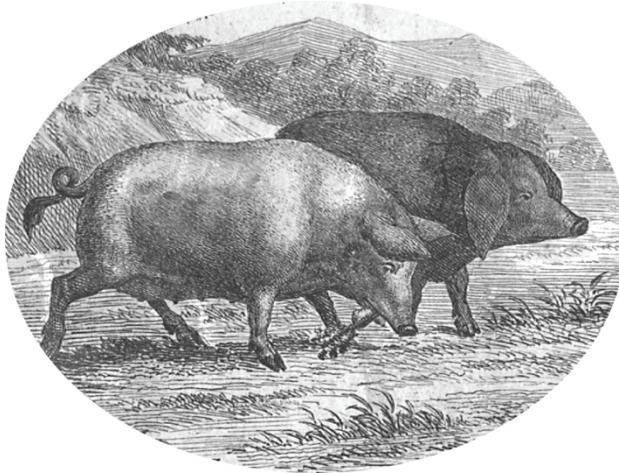
one pair of sheets 3£ 10s a pair of dittos 5£	8 10 0
2 pair of dittos at 3£ 10s a pair	7 0 0
a pair of dittos 3£ another pair of ditto 4£ 10s	7 10 0
2 pair of old dittos at 1£ 15s a pair	3 10 0
a pair of dittos 2£ 15s another pair dittos 2£ 10s	5 5 0
a pair of dittos 2£ 5s a pair of dittos 2£ 15s	5 0 0
a pair of pillow coats	0 12 0
2 pair of dittos at 13s a pair	1 6 0
a pair of pillow coats 14s a pair of dittos 12s	1 6 0
one single pair of ditto 4s two twilled table cloths 1£	1 4 0
2 old twilled table cloths 16s large ditto 15s	1 11 0
one muslin apron 2£ 15s five towels 1£ 4s	3 19 0
2 shirts 2£ two checkered handkerchiefs 1£ 10s	3 10 0

one set of curtains 6£ 3 pewter platters 6£	12 0 0
1 lesser ditto 1£ 10s 4 plates 2£ 8s 2 dittos 1£	4 18 0
2 pint basins 12s 9 pewter spoons 18s	1 10 0
a [cor]duroy coat and vest 12£ a brown coat and vest 9£	21 0 0
another coat and vest 5£ plain coat and vest 8£	3 10 0
a pair of blue flannel britches	0 18 0
a pair of streaked dittos 10s a pair of leather dittos 3£	3 10 0
a pair of long dittos 14s a pair of checkered long dittos 16s	1 10 0
a holland shirt 5£ a checkered holland ditto 3£	8 0 0
checkered homemade ditto 2£ a linen ditto 1£ 10s	3 10 0
a pair of worsted stockings	1 15 0
a pair of black dittos 2£ a pair of gloves 8s	2 8 0
a pair of old shoes 1£ a pair of dittos and buckles	1 14 0
a pair of knee buckles 5s a pair of silver buttons 1£	1 5 0
a mourning crepe gown 8£ a calamenco gown 7£	15 0 0
worsted ditto 5£ a plaid ditto 4£ 10s	9 10 0
a riding hood head & cloak	6 0 0
a pair of stays 3£ a pair of old dittos 10s	3 10 0
another pair of old dittos 2s a fustian blanket 16s	0 18 0
a Bible 10s a pair of child's stays 10s	1 0 0
a large worsted blanket 1£ 12s a flannel ditto 15s	2 7 0
a streaked ditto 12s a lesser streaked ditto 8s	1 0 0
a child's coat 1£ 5s a chest with drawers 4£	5 5 0
a chest with a lock and key	2 5 0
another ditto with drawers	5 0 0
a chest with a cross upon the end	2 0 0
a chest with a round O upon the end	1 18 0
another plain ditto 1£ 15s a ditto with a lock 1£ 15s	3 10 0

a large box with split lid	0 8 0
a ditto with carved work 5s a plain ditto 5s	0 10 0
a meal chest 1£ a table with a drawer 3£	4 0 0
a ditto 2£ 15s a lesser ditto 1£ 15s a small ditto 1£ 6s	5 16 0
a large brass kettle 18£ another ditto 11£	29 0 0
a small ditto 5£ the best warming pan 6£ 10s	11 10 0
the next best ditto 6£ a poor ditto 4£	10 0 0
a pair of tailor's shears 10s a pair of dittos 4s	0 14 0
a pair of andirons that weighed 10 pounds	3 0 0
2 case bottles 18s 3 glass bottles 15s	1 13 0
a pint glass 3s 2 half pint bottles 5s	0 8 0
1 beaker glass 6s 2 china plates 8s	0 14 0
a small pewter platter 1£ 5s 2 large pewter basins 1£ 6s	2 11 0
3 old platters 15s 2 plates at 6s apiece 12s	1 7 0
1 old porringer & butter saucer	0 4 0
2 quart pots 1£ 8s two spoons 4s	0 12 0
2 small pewter platters 2£ 10s 3 pewter basins 1£ 5s	3 15 0
3 pewter plates at 6s apiece	0 18 0
1 old ditto 3s an old chamber pot 1£	1 3 0
3 old porringers 15s one old ditto 2s	0 17 0
6 pewter spoons 9s 1 tooth and edge [tutenag] ditto 2s	0 11 0
a pint pot 6s a tin ditto 8s	0 14 0
a small tin tunnel [funnel] 2s 14 trenchers 1£ 4s	1 6 0
6 pair of knives & forks	1 10 0
1 knot dish 2s 6p 12 old trenchers 11s	0 13 6
1 old pewter platter 15s a salt mortar & pestle 1£	1 15 0
a pepper mortar 5s a salt box 5s a large skimmer 3s	0 13 0
2 large earthen plates 10s 3 lesser dittos 6s 6p	0 16 6
2 pudding pans 8s 2 lesser dittos 5s 6p	0 13 6
a dipper 5s an earthen mug 3s	0 8 0
a gun 10£ a sword and belt 3£ a cartridge box	13 6 0
4 powder horns 11s 6p 6 1/2 pounds of lead 1£ 2s 9p	1 14 3
a Bible 10s a psalm book 3s a sermon book 6s	0 19 0
a sermon book 3s a ditto 5s another ditto 3s	0 11 0
3 books 5s another ditto 3s 3 old dittos 4s 6p	0 12 6
2 pocket books 7s one bell 1£ 10s	1 17 0
a hammer 4s a pair of pinchers 5s	0 9 0
2 gimlets 3s a pair of compasses 1s 6p a stone jug 10s	0 14 6
a small file 5s a razor 4s a marking iron 5s	0 14 0
a hand saw 2£ 10s the best hatchet 3£	5 10 0
an old ditto 10s a large hatchet 1£ 10s	2 0 0
a narrow ax 2£ an old ditto 10s	2 10 0
a small ditto 1£ 10s an adze 10s largest auger 10s	2 10 0
the next largest auger 15s a drawing knife 8s	1 3 0
another auger 10s a lesser ditto 5s	0 15 0
3 chisels 11s a small gouge 5s 2 frows 10s	1 6 0
a pair of steelyards 1£ 10s a dung fork 1£	2 10 0

a dung shovel 1£ 2 broad hoes 1£ 5s	2 5 0
2 wedges & dog 1£ 1s a ring beetle 10s	1 11 0
27 pounds of iron 2£ 14s 12 pounds of spikes 1£ 10s	4 4 0
6 old horse shoes 10s a yoke & ring 6s	0 16 0
7 pounds of iron 14s 4 1/2 pounds good iron 14s	1 8 0
8 1/2 pounds old chain	1 16 0
3 heel rings 7s 6p 4 heel wedges 2s	0 9 6
2 tholes [wooden pins] 6s 3/4 pounds of steel	0 10 0
1 old cart rope 12s a large pitchfork 16s	1 8 0
a lesser fork 10s a new scythe 2£ 5s	2 15 0
another scythe 2£ 10s 2 old dittos 11s 3p	3 1 3
a pigeon net 1£ a corn fan 4£ 15s	5 15 0
2 rub stones 3s a large earthen pan 5s	0 8 0
2 new corn bags 1£ 10s 2 poorer dittos 1£ 5s	2 15 0
a Dutch wheel 2£ 10s a great wheel 15s	3 15 0
another ditto 15s an old ditto 10s	1 5 0
an old fashioned little wheel	1 0 0
a great chair 1£ 5 black chairs 5£	6 0 0
a ditto without a bottom	0 10 0
12 old dittos 5£ 12s a new corn basket	11 8 0
an old corn basket 12s 2 lesser dittos 18s	1 10 0
a handle basket 3s a large cockle riddle [coarse sieve] 10s	0 13 0
a meal sieve 6s 2 more old dittos 12s	0 18 0
a half bushel 18s an old ditto 5s	1 3 0
3 meal trays 18s a pair of oyster tongs 1£ 10s	2 8 0
2 tubs 8s flaxseed 1£ 10s a dry hogshead 6s	2 4 0
a cradle & pillow & 2 rugs 15s a pair of cards 5s	1 0 0
5 old barrels in the chamber	0 10 0
a pair of warping bars & scalms [racks holding spools]	1 10 0
2 stays 15s a piece a poor ditto 12s	2 2 0
a pair of swifts 12s a sleigh & pair of gears 1£ 17s	2 9 0
a loom 10£ a man's saddle 16£	26 0 0
a pillion 1£ a new bridle 1£ 5s	2 5 0
a bridle 10s old ditto 6s an old pannel [saddle padding] 1£ 10s	2 6 0
a man's old saddle 1£ a set of spools 2£ 10s	3 10 0
a span shackle & bolt 17s 7 1/2 pounds nails	3 2 0
4 hundred of hobs 12s a sled 1£ 10s	2 2 0
a cart & wheels 14£ plow irons 5£ 10s 1	9 10 0
a horse plow 1£ 5s an iron harrow 6£	7 5 0
12 3/4 leather	4 8 6
a crowbar that weighed 17 1/2 pounds	3 10 0
a coarse riddle 3s 2 new hogshead 6£	6 3 0
2 old hogsheads 5£ an old ditto 2£	7 0 0
one new barrel 1£ 4s 12 old dittos	8 14 0
a new half barrel 16s 4 dittos 1£ 16s	2 12 0
5 old meal barrels 2£ 10s a barrel churn	5 10 0
2 butter tubs 10s 2 wooden tunnels 18s	1 8 0

a barrel of boiled cider	3 0 0
6 barrels of raw cider 12£ a barrel of apple beer	13 0 0
2 candlesticks 6s a cider mill 30£	30 6 0
the eighth part of a sawmill	80 0 0
the house 6 0£ the barn 120£	720 0 0
hogs house 10£ a wooden bottle 10s	10 10 0
a 2 quart bottle 10s 2 hogshead tubs 15s	1 5 0
a washing tub 6s 16 sheep 30s a head	24 6 0
the best grindstone 2£ 5s a ditto 1£ 10s	3 15 0
one pair of oxen 60£ a bull 18£	78 0 0
two year old steer 12£ one old cow 18£	30 0 0
one three year old heifer	14 0 0
one mare 65£ 1 old horse 13£	78 0 0
1 hog weighed 81 pounds	5 1 3
another ditto weighed 71 pounds	4 8 9
a large yoke ring & staple	1 14 0
a staple & hook 18s a pair of horse gears 15s	1 3 0
2 threshing flails 6s a rake 5s	0 11
an old sow 4£ 8s 9p 3 pigs 22s apiece 4£ 3s	8 11 9
1 old pannal 1£ 10s a sickle 2s an old chamber pot 6s	1 18 0
a load of hay 5£ 176 pounds of pork 17£ 12s	22 12 0
1 acre of wheat on the ground supposed to be 10 bushels	15 0 0
3 acres of rye upon the ground supposed to be 10 bushels per acre	12 10 0
1/2 acre of rye upon the ground supposed to be five bushels	3 15 0
3 1/2 bushels of maslin [mixed grains, usually wheat and rye]	5 5 0
4 1/2 bushels of salt	4 10 0



10 1/2 bushels of grown maslin	4 10 0
12 bushels of oats	6 0 0
4 bushels of barley 4£ 3 pounds of good flax 18s	4 18 0
2 1/2 pounds of flax at 4s per pound	0 10 0
105 pieces of barrel heading & some staves	1 5 0
2 hives of bees 3£ apiece	6 0 0
one acre of land on the east side of the highway	
whereon the house stands	50 0 0
1 1/2 acres on the same side	52 0 0
3 acres of orchard on the west side of the way	50 0 0
24 acres of land on the west side of the way	840 0 0
8 1/2 acres upon the west side of the highway formerly	
belonging to Nathaniel Finch	297 10 0
17 yards of flannel 1£ 2s per yard	18 14 0
a childs frock & cap	1 0 0
1 3/4 pounds of stocking yarn	1 15 0
8 1/2 pounds of flax	1 14 0
1 pillion	1 0 0
9 1/2 pounds of flax	1 18 0
Total	3,367 18 3

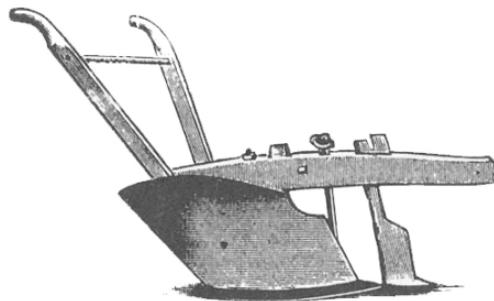


*Estate of Capt. Ephraim Sprague, 1754
Town of Lebanon, Windham Probate District*

	£	s	d	f
1 hat £47 do. 40/ pair of gloves 16/	1	15	11	1
1 coat £17 do. jacket £6 10/	2	2	9	0
1 gauze handkerchief 11/ do. check'd linen 4/	0	1	4	2
1 hat weed 4/ 1 white muslin handkerchief 30/	0	3	2	2
1 great coat £4 1 pr. leather breeches £1	1	10	10	2
1 do. 40/ 1 tow do. 20/ 1 coat £8 do. £4	1	7	3	1
1 do. jacket 30/ 1 pr. sale stockings 45	0	6	9	3
yarn do. 30/ do. 5/6 1 cane £5	0	12	3	2
1 pr. of check'd shirts 50/	0	4	7	0
1 pr. of shoes 20/ do. 10/ 1 pr. of boots 15/	0	4	1	2
1 pr. of shoe buckles 8/	0	0	8	3
a tobacco box 2/ a great Bible £5	0	9	3	1
do. small 10/ 1 "Exposition on ye Rev." 4/	0	1	3	2
B.P. Beveridge "Thoughts on Religion" 4/	0	0	4	2
1 old law book Watts "Psalms" an old pamph. 5/6	0	0	6	0
1 bed and bolster £23	2	1	10	0
1 blue & white check'd coverlet £5 do. £3	0	14	6	1
2 sheets £3 1 diaper table cloth 30/	0	8	2	1
1 cotton & linen sheet 30/ 1 chest of drawers £7	0	15	5	1
1 black chest 35/ 1 bedstead 35/	0	6	4	1
1 bed cord 35/ 1 glass bottle 6/ 1 ½ pint bottle 3/	0	4	0	2
1 looking glass 5/6 1 ivory comb 5/	0	1	0	0
1 shoe 25/ 1 cracked iron kettle 15/	0	3	8	0
1 iron pot 25/ 1 frying pan 50/ 1 warming pan 22/	0	8	9	3
a chamber pot 3/ 1 old basin 11/ 4 pewter plates 32/	0	4	2	2
1 small platter 15/ 1 large platter 44	0	5	9	1
1 small basin with a foot 15/ 1 pint basin 6/	0	1	11	0
1 old baker cup 4/ 1 quart cup 6/	0	1	10	0
1 iron goose 36/	0	3	3	2
1 table 25/ 1 chain £3/ 3 horse chains 50/	0	12	6	2
1 ax 25/ 2 old hoes 5/6 1 trammel 40/	0	6	4	1
1 pr. of plow irons £3 cops 10/	0	6	4	1
cart wheel bands and boxes £17	1	10	10	2
1 pillion 20/ 1 knot platter 10/	0	2	9	0
1 large square table £4 a small round do. 20/	0	9	2	0
1 cedar meat tub 30/ 1 set of curtains £3/ 10	0	9	2	0
5 chairs @ 7/ pr. chair 35/	0	3	2	2
1 white chest 15/ 1 small kittle 10/	0	2	3	2
1 saddle 40/ 1 bridle 15/ 1 cow £24	2	8	7	3
1 mare and colt £1 0	9	1	10	0
13 sheep £19/10 8 loads of hay £56	6	17	3	1
land @ £35 0	318	03	8	0

1 half bushel 12/ 1 pail 14/ 1 drawing knife 10/	0	3	3	2
1 loom quill wheel and swifts £16	1	9	1	0
1 32 reed & harness £3/10 do. 28 @ £3/10	0	12	8	2
1 do. 18: 16/ 1 pr. of yoke irons 30/	0	4	2	2
2 cider barrels 20/ 1 sheep bell 26/	0	4	2	2
1 pitchfork 8/	0	0	8	3
1 bond of £50 on Peleg Sprague	4	10	10	2
 Total	 363	 1	 3	 3

Note: In this inventory, the values given next to the item reflect the traditional values long in use in the community; the amounts in the total columns are discounted by approximately 1/11 to reflect a revaluation of British currency.



Highways to History

The Archaeology of Connecticut's 18th-Century Lifeways

This book is about Colonial-period lifeways in Connecticut, based on data recovered from archaeological excavations of the buried sites of four 18th-century houses in Andover, North Branford, Waterford and Wilton. The archaeological data, combined with documentary research, opens a new window into how people in Connecticut lived in Colonial times.

- from the Introduction

